NOVEMBER 1960

Commentary

ALFRED KAZIN

THE FUNCTION OF CRITICISM TODAY

STAUGHTON LYND

HOW THE COLD WAR BEGAN

Andrew Hacker

The Rebelling Young Scholars

Hannah Arendt

Revolution & Public Happiness

THE CHANGING ANGLO-JEWISH COMMUNITY

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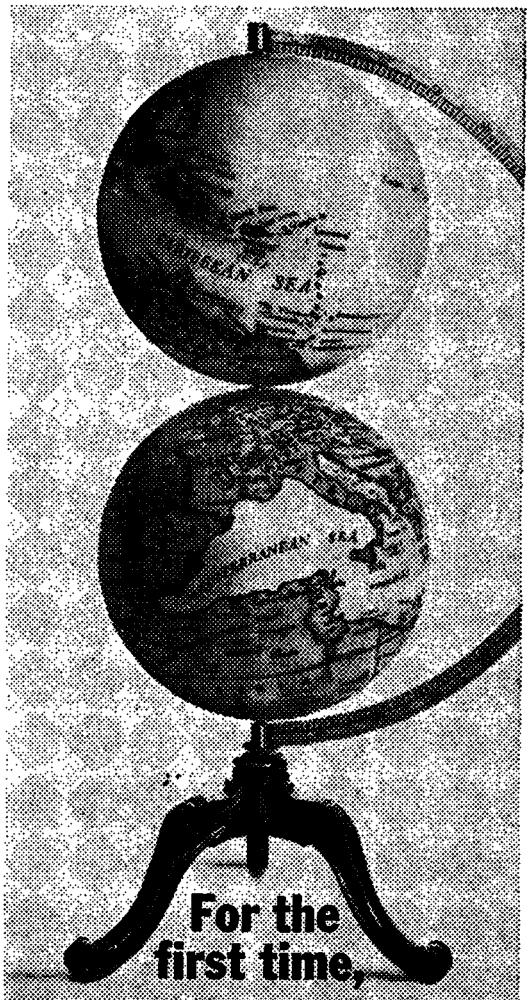

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15TH ANNIVERSARY OF COMMENTARY

This issue marks the 15th anniversary of COMMENTARY. *The first number of the magazine, under the editorship of the late Elliot E. Cohen, appeared in November 1945.*

Plans are under way for a number of observances in celebration of the anniversary year. Details of the program will be announced from time to time in future issues of the magazine.

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The Function of Criticism Today

ALFRED KAZIN

SOME years ago, in a course I was giving on European novels, a student handed in a paper in which he described Emile Zola's *Germinal*—that powerful but old-fashioned novel of French miners struggling for their rights—as characterized by *paradox, tension,* and *ambiguity*. Since these terms were brought into modern criticism to characterize the tensely wrought and ambivalent verse of the 17th-century metaphysicals, and then the poetry of those (like T. S. Eliot) who absorbed a style, a manner, from these Hamlet-like literary intellectuals, I explained that Zola's rather large and florid prose style—the style a French naturalist needs to get himself through a shelf of documentary novels describing the ravages of alcoholism and syphilis on all the descendants of a French family—could not possibly be compared to those highly artful poets. Zola's style certainly has its share of grandiloquent poetry, and Zola liked, in the manner of the epic-writing romantics, to sign himself *poète*. But *Germinal,* in both its crudity and its passion, its violent sexual metaphors and its indignant description of the oppressed, is so far from the language and subject of an Eliot that, properly speaking, it makes no sense to find in 19th-century naturalistic fiction the attributes of what is, even for our time, only one kind of poetry.

My student insisted on his point. He had been instructed in *paradox, tension,* and *ambiguity* in a course called "Introduction to Literature," and with the very text of *Germinal* before him, he was so concerned with showing that he knew how to read his book with a modish approach to literature, that he simply could not recognize the most obvious quality of Zola's great novel—which was its force. He felt no necessary connection between his experience and that described in the novel, but he had brought in wholly arbitrary connections, couched in a critical vocabulary that he had learned by rote, whose historical applications and limitations he did not understand. He was like a tourist in a foreign country; he could imitate the language but he did not understand it. There was no community of interest between himself and the novel, but he did not even realize this, he was not even thinking of the novel he was reading, so busy was he plastering *paradox, tension,* and *ambiguity* over Zola's astonished face.

Now this quality of making arbitrary connections, this lack of historical awareness, often of historical information rudimentary enough to supply guideposts and danger signals in going through the country of Zola, this false sophistication—this is what troubles me about many students

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ALFRED KAZIN'S works include *On Native Grounds* and *The Inmost Leaf*. The present article was read last month in Minnesota as the first of a series of lectures on criticism sponsored jointly by the Walker Art Center and the University of Minnesota Extension Division.

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who have been taught to read critically, as the saying goes, but who do not really read at all, who do not enjoy reading, who have no interest in literature. But equally, I'm troubled by the editors who print my essays but are utterly unconcerned with my ideas and values, with the readers who come up to say how much they have "enjoyed" a piece but who never discuss the argument in it. There's something wrong, some basic element missing, in the relationship of the audience to the critic in America today, and I see this wrongness in the professional journals for which you don't have to take the trouble to write well and in the Sunday book supplements that exist only to sell books, in the lack of general magazines publishing serious criticism, and in the very absence of any responsible and authoritative evaluation of contemporary literature. There are a great many rewarding and fruitful sides to being a literary critic, but one of the things that we don't talk about, that some of us never even notice, is the absence of echo to our work, the uncertainty of response, the confusion of basic terms in which we deal. It's not that we lack an audience; it's that the audience doesn't know what it wants, is not sure of what it thinks, is fundamentally uneasy with literature, even afraid of it, and wants to control the beast rather than to live with it.

This situation is what characterizes criticism in a mass society—mass communications in themselves have changed nothing and determine nothing. As soon as you get people who do not read themselves but who feel that they need criticism to make contact with literature, as soon as the educated public (which used to test its own opinions on the critic's) breaks up into the self-declared mass that wants things to be explained, then you get the critic-as-popularizer, the critic consciously mediating between the work of art and the public. But no critic who is any good sets out deliberately to enlighten someone else; he writes to put his own ideas in order; to possess, as a critic, through the integral force of his intelligence, the work of art that someone else had created. Of course he will elucidate, he will analyze, he will define and locate and explain, but all the things he does for his reader he does first for himself.

WHAT the critic does for his reader, for the public, he does on the flood tide, so to speak, of his excitement with a particular book, a brave new insight, an evaluation, a theory. A critic is not an artist, except incidentally; he is a thinker, and it is the force, the exactness, the extension—perhaps the originality—of his thinking, that gets him to say those things that the artist himself may value as an artist, the reader as a reader. To the true critic insights are valuable for themselves, and different members of the audience may use them in different ways. But no critic who works for the pleasure and excitement of his task writes just to instruct the writer he is reviewing and for the sake exclusively of the public that reads him. For the interest of criticism lies in itself, in the thinking that it practices.

Criticism affects the artist only as the artist is himself a member of the educated public that reads criticism. A writer will often get better advice about a book from his editor or his wife, or his literary agent, than from a critic. But the critic, if he is interesting and deep enough, will affect the writer far more profoundly than would specific technical criticism of a book—by making him see the significance of his efforts. At its best, true literary criticism may actually suggest new subjects, can enliven the imagination. This is the great tradition of criticism, a part of the general criticism of established values which must go on in every age. Its greatest single attribute is its force, its passionate declaration of the true nature of man and what his proper destiny must be. In America itself, this was the kind of criticism that Emerson wrote in his great essay on The Poet and that Whitman created in *Democratic Vistas,* John Jay Chapman in his

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essay on Emerson, and the young Van Wyck Brooks in *America's Coming of Age* and his much underrated book on Mark Twain. The greatest examples of such criticism in modern times were Arnold's essays on poetry and culture, Proust's attack on Sainte-Beuve, and Nietzsche's on Wagner. To me this is the most valuable kind of criticism—the kind that Baudelaire wrote in dealing with art, Shaw in dealing with drama, and that before them had been practiced by Goethe in his remarks on the Age of Prose, by Schiller in his letters on aesthetics, by Blake in his personal manifestoes, by Wordsworth in his preface to *Lyrical Ballads*. It is the kind of criticism that I always think of as *histoire morale*, that sums up the spirit of the age in which we live and then asks us to transcend it, that enables us to see things in the grand perspective, and that in the way of Marx on Greek philosophy, of Kierkegaard on Mozart, of Nietzsche on the birth of tragedy, of Shaw on Ibsen, of Lawrence on American literature, asks us —not only in the light of man's history but of his whole striving—to create a future in keeping with man's imagination.

It is precisely because he once wrote criticism of this kind that Eliot has had his influence—Eliot, when asked by Paul Elmer More why his poetry and criticism were written in such different tones, replied that poetry deals with the world as it is, criticism with the world as it ought to be. It is because of his grounding in the historical ideals of self-liberation which we associate with Marx and Freud that Lionel Trilling has remained so steadily a moral influence, an Emersonian teacher of the tribe, and it is because of his constant awareness that books make revolutions in the public history as well as in the private sensibility of men that Edmund Wilson has been able to write with equal insight of Proust and John O'Hara, Michelet and Edna St. Vincent Millay, Tolstoy and Lincoln, the Hebrew Bible and the Marquis de Sade. The Van Wyck Brooks who, at least in 1915, wrote with such verve and exhilaration against the plaster gods of American life worked constantly with this sense of being sent forward by an irresistible movement of social criticism in all fields. And as I write I seem to see this image not in any young American critic but in the young British drama critic, Kenneth Tynan, who before he left this country was summoned up before a secret Congressional session for his dangerous thoughts. Tynan's rule for drama criticism is, "Rouse tempers, goad, lacerate, raise whirlwinds," and I must say that his sense of art as something dramatically and effectively involved in the affairs of men is one which any serious critic of drama must have, for on the stage, at least, the passions of men as makers of history are inescapable.

The essence of such criticism is that it is concerned explicitly, fightingly, with an ideal of man, with a conception of what man is seeking to become, with what he must become. The dynamic sense of values, the electric and constantly demanding sense of his age which such a critic has—this is the quality that makes him a particularly keen and demanding analyst of concrete values, of aesthetic differences. For there is a significant distinction between what I would call passive "taste," as a social category concerned only with success of execution, and the critic's judgment, which says that so-and-so is a good writer, but not good enough, or that it is because he is a good writer that he is also a dangerous writer, such a narrowing or stultifying influence. By keeping alive the spirit of criticism in the sense in which the Enlightenment gave it to us—the "modern spirit," as Matthew Arnold called it, which subjects everything handed down to us, all institutions and beliefs, to critical examination, we no longer limit our aesthetic categories to the beautiful, the sublime, the merely correct. Goethe, in his essay on art and the classic, identified the modern age with what he called the age of prose, and lamented that "the all too

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radical attempt of the age of philosophy (18th century) at a 'humanization' and rationalization of the mysterious ends in a perverted miracle. The mystery, cheated of its rightful place, goes underground, reverting to its primeval, unholy and barbarous stage. No center holds the human world together and men must lose their bearings." This is virtually the language of Yeats's "The Second Coming," and in one form or another of most of the criticism that has been modeled on Eliot's well-known laments for Catholic order. But Goethe himself, as a poet, a dramatist, as a speculative free-wheeling scientist, found his new forms, new interests, a brave new future for himself, in exactly this modern spirit. And criticism, in our modern sense of it, examining works not for their classic theory or neo-classic correctness, but for their fulfillment of the goals which they have independently set, has led to an awareness of aesthetic possibility and of individual vision which unites *all* modern poets, novelists, and painters, whether they acknowledge it or not, whether they want it or not, as children of the Romantic movement. The point of this modern spirit in art is not that everyone agrees on the value of the modern movement, but that everyone must work in its atmosphere of freedom and individual discovery—Catholic artists as well as secularist artists, the haters of the modern spirit as well as its most pragmatist admirers. There are no longer any aesthetic goals which we can name outside the individual works of art that give us our fertile and experimental sense of aesthetic achievement. Marcel Proust wrote an essay attacking Sainte-Beuve's naturalistic conception of art, and in the middle of this essay virtually began to sketch the first pages of his famous novel. He had discovered his own necessary vision, his artistic credo, in attacking as a profound danger to the imaginative life of humanity Sainte-Beuve's "neo-scientific" view of life. But out of this necessary "chaos" of positions, as Goethe thought of it, had come not merely Proust's discovery of himself as an original and major artist but his discovery, through the profound revelation afforded by the inner consciousness, of the new vision of the eternal open to modern artists. The possibilities opened up to us by creative memory became Proust's idea of the future.

To use Jacques Barzun's significant phrase, the "energies of art" are revealed to us, and so can be described and judged, only when they are seen against the background of man's striving, man's belief that *he* can help create the future he wants. There is no energy where there is no hope—no energy, no wit, no passion, no involvement, no lightness. Our individual sense of the future is the dimension in which we breathe, or as Emily Dickinson put it. *"I dwell in Possibility––/A fairer house than Prose."* We can judge what things are like because in our hearts we know what we really want; we judge by the direction, the vector of forces, along which life seems to be moving. If a writer believes in his own vision of things, no matter how idiosyncratic it may seem, that is all the future he may need. But he must believe in it, as Blake believed in his visions, Dostoevsky in the redemption of sinners, and Marx in the holy city that would be created by communism. This sense of the eventual vindication of life by the imagination is what gives meaning to every great artist's life, and it is the critic's job to support this belief, to delineate it, to fight for it. Through this dimension of the imaginative future alone can we understand what literature is for. And to bring this kind of imagination, this historical sense of what has been, what is now, what must be—to bring this into play, in the immediate confrontation and analysis of works of art, is to make evaluation significant—one might almost say, possible. There is in every true work of art a tendency pressing for recognition, pressing a work of art together, and without recognizing what the work of art is

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itself striving to be, in the light of what man himself is always striving to become, our evaluation becomes a question of frigid correctness.

So strongly committed are we by now to the idea of a work of art as created from a wholly individual standpoint, and measurable by the goals which the work itself has set, that anyone who really practices critical judgment, who is constantly engaged in confronting new and unforeseen works of art, actually finds his own physical energies challenged and changed by the energies of art. He cannot save himself from the sometimes painful new experience that a new work presents. This does not mean that he is an impressionist, taking his own prejudices and limitations as the only values. It means that his skill begins by noticing his intuitive reactions and building up from them; he responds to the matter in hand with perception at the pitch of passion, as Henry James puts it; the unity of thinking and feeling actually exists in the passionate operation of the critic's intelligence. Judgment can be a very physical matter indeed. A false or strained work of art can make you literally sick. Anyone who is serious about criticism, for whom judgment is an active factor in his daily awareness, will have an intensely sensory and tactile response to poems, stories, novels, dramas, essays. In some way, the critic's sense of his existing balance is challenged by that new balance of forces that is a work of art, and in this downright challenge to our physical being that a new work of art can represent, the critic will recognize how much he has been advanced, and how much not, by a work that can be as real to him as sex and his daily bread.

THERE is no discrimination without partisanship to an ideal. It is undesirable to have a perfect taste, to respond properly to all the masterpieces. Unless we approach literature demandingly, as I say, unless we respect it for its influence, we fall into the attitude of the dilettante, the epicurean, on the style of the late Bernard Berenson, who by trying to prove that his taste was equal to the best that has been thought and said, made culture look like a table set with tidbits. The critic who has the equipment to be a force, the critic who can set up standards for his age, must be a partisan of one kind of art and a bitter critic of another. Like Johnson, he will be unfair to the metaphysicals; like Goethe, to Hölderlin; like Sainte-Beuve, to Flaubert; like Arnold, to Whitman; like Emerson, to Dickens; like Henry James, to Tolstoy; like Eliot, to Shelley; like Wilson, to Kafka; like Trilling, to Dreiser. Such a critic will be not only unfair, he will pursue his prejudice to the point of absurdity, setting up a straw figure that will serve to bear all his dislike and even his hatred of a certain kind of art. And significantly, the critic who sees himself setting standards for his age may stimulate new works of art by helping to create the climate of discussion, by revealing the hidden issues that give a writer a hint of new subjects.

Above all, the critic who works with this sense of the age in his bones, who sees himself working toward the future that man must build for himself, is always a writer. He writes for the public, not to a few imagined co-specialists; he writes to convince, to argue, to establish his argument; he writes dramatically, marshaling his evidence in a way that pure logic would never approve and pure scholarship would never understand, but which is justifiable, if it succeeds, as moral argument in the great tradition of literature. The critic who writes well is the critic who lives in literature, who is involved himself and therefore sees the involvement of literature in our conduct, our thinking, our pleasures, our human fate. Some of the best criticism has been communicated in talk, like Hazlitt's, Goethe's, Alfred Whitehead's, but we know this only because someone wrote it down. Criticism that is not *written*, in the best sense, communicable as literature, is only advice—and if

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you read the actual letters to authors of such famous editors as Maxwell Perkins, you see immediately the difference between editing and criticism. Some great criticism has been written in private letters, like Ezra Pound's to Laurence Binyon on the latter's translation of *The Divine Comedy*; some as inserts in novels, as in Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* and Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man;* a good deal of really valuable criticism has, of course, been written in the form of verse. But it has to be written so that we can read it—that is, like Plato's philosophy and Marx's sociology and Freud's psychology, it has to explain itself and be read for itself. Criticism should never be so professional that only professionals can read it, for the trouble with writing for professionals is that you don't take the trouble to write well. I have been staggered lately by the absolutely worthless essays in so many recent academic journals devoted to modern literature and criticism. Eliot and Faulkner and Salinger haven't smiled on their anxious elucidators at all. The scholarly journal, in this sense, is no more an organ for criticism than is the *Saturday Review.*

CRITICISM exists as literature only when it has a great argument to present, and to this I would add that the critic knows his argument in full only by writing it, by coming to grips with his own mind. Arnold's essays are a prime example, and indeed Arnold's essays are far greater than his poetry precisely because even his best poems give the effect of a mind too quickly made up against the modern age and lamenting its loneliness, whereas in his essays, those incomparably noble essays on the study of poetry, on translating Homer, you feel that the subject under discussion has taken him in hand and is directing and searching him out. Eliot's essays seem to me most valuable not for their general prejudices but for the thinking that goes on in them line by line. I have always found it hard to understand how people who dislike Eliot's general line, and I myself certainly do—people like F. R. Leavis and Kenneth Rexroth and Karl Shapiro—can overlook the exciting and moving quality of concern, the level of actual critical thinking, that goes on in Eliot's essays. Eliot, in his essay on Blake, managed to say exactly the right things about Blake's imaginative independence, and to draw the wrong conclusions. But who cares about Eliot's disapproving conclusion so long as we have his exhilarating analysis of Blake's mind? Like everyone else, Eliot has changed his mind about so many things that his conclusions, as such, have no more authority than has Henry James's ignorant assumption that Russian writers never have any style. But Eliot working out a line of critical thinking about the character of Othello, or the conflict between Pascal and Montaigne, creates superb criticism by thinking, how shall I say, not conclusively, as a philosopher might, but critically—making us see all the elements of the literary experience before him.

This has always been Edmund Wilson's special gift, and it is because of the excitement that a particular essay by Wilson can generate, not necessarily by the taste that he upholds, that he can give so much pleasure to people who distrust his opinions. For ironically, it is because Wilson is *not* the mediator between artist and public (except incidentally) he often declares himself to be, it is because in his best work he thinks and thinks, almost desperately, to put his own thoughts in order, that the resulting tension and passion make him effective to the general reader. Similarly, Lionel Trilling's *The Liberal Imagination* comes out of a deep personal drive to set in order the underlying conflict that must possess a radical mind that has seen so many radical values abandoned, misused, and converted into the very opposite of these values. Any critic who is any good is going to write out of a profound inner struggle between what has been and what must be, the values he is used to and those which pres-

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ently exist, between the past and the present out of which the future must be born.

This struggle with oneself as well as with the age, out of which something must be written and which therefore can be read—this is my test for a critic, and it is for this reason that I admire critics in themselves so different as Shaw and Mencken and Chesterton, Santayana and Eliot, Wilson and Trilling. Of the newer critics writing in English, I admire the dramatic criticism of Kenneth Tynan and Eric Bentley and Lionel Abel, the essays on Whitman and Frost by Randall Jarrell and on the American novel by Richard Chase. W. H. Auden's poetry seems to me terribly impoverished in recent years, but his critical essays are often profound—yet always written in the great English and Continental tradition of the *feuilleton,* the weekly article. I once heard Professor Harry Levin say disparagingly of the English critics that they have the amateur spirit, but I would reverse the term and say that a critic should be able to write well enough to get paid and so lose his amateur standing.

I like criticism to be as serious as possible in content, but as personal and even idiosyncratic in style as possible—thus reversing the usual academic recipe of the trivial point and the heavy style. Have we forgotten under what conditions so much of the most powerful criticism has originated? Poe wrote his greatest critical essays for general magazines, in the same way that Coleridge and Hazlitt wrote for newspapers. Arnold lectured to audiences so large that many could not hear him. Sainte-Beuve wrote his greatest pieces week after week for newspapers. Eliot wrote his best early essays as a reviewer for English weeklies. Proust wrote his own first essays for frivolous Parisian papers. In our time perhaps the most valuable new interpretation of Lincoln appeared in the *New Yorker.* It was the *Seven Arts,* the old *Nation* and *New Republic,* the *Freeman,* the *Dial,* the *Liberator, Poetry,* the old *Masses,* that published the essays of Randolph Bourne and Van Wyck Brooks and Edmund Wilson, Conrad Aiken and Santayana, William Carlos Williams and Ezra Pound. It was the *American Mercury* that made Mencken one of the prime critical influences on the 20's, and it was in such magazines that Eliot and Pound, Frost and O'Neill, were defended, explained, established. Go back and recall that Emerson's great essays were popular lectures, that Henry James's famous essay on "The Art of Fiction" appeared in a popular magazine, as did his best fiction, that Howells' essays on realism and his marvellous essay on Mark Twain all came out first in magazines. In England, the most significant essays of Beerbohm, Shaw, Wilde, were written as dramatic criticism for magazines, just as Virginia Woolf and Orwell, Lawrence, Chesterton, Ford Madox Ford, and more recently C. P. Snow, Angus Wilson, V. S. Pritchett, have been read in the *New Statesman,* the *Spectator,* the *Sunday Times,* the *Observer,* the *Manchester Guardian Weekly,* the *Times Literary Supplement,* the *Tribune.* This kind of critic sees himself not as a hack, but as a man seizing the largest possible audience for his ideas, and in the weekly dialogue he holds with his readers, he establishes standards, sets up a forum around which ideas gather, where neglected important figures can be revived and new writers recognized.

Behind this tradition of criticism lay the common conviction that there were issues to be fought out, that terms might be shared and understood but that there was no agreement over the solutions. Criticism was still seen as part of the general debate over the ends of man in our age. This was the struggle between Chesterton and Shaw, and earlier, between Wells and Henry James; in America, between the new experimental writers of the 20's and the bitterly resisting old guard represented by the New Humanists. Criticism cannot live without dispute over the terms of art

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and the significance of certain kinds of art, and dispute was possible because the critic and *his* critics—and the audience which criticized them all—were somehow alive to the same issues and shared the same culture, so they were free to disagree about the necessary ends to be reached.

Now it is my impression that for some time critics in America have had too easy a time of it, that their readers no longer make any great demand on them. And I believe the reason for this is the growing assumption that literature cannot affect our future, that the future is in other hands. It is my impression that there is not much belief that literature can exercise its classic functions of providing ideas central to social policy and moral behavior.

Literature no longer seems to exercise much influence. The reason for this, I think, is the pervasive feeling that our freedom is being taken away from us, that the new society now being built up by the technological revolution and collectivism may no longer leave room for the old-fashioned individual in literary pursuits. C. P. Snow, in *The Two Cultures,* insists that so long as our most sensitive poets and distinguished literary intelligences refuse to become literate in science, the prime maker and shaper of our lives, literature must continue to dwindle into insignificance. Last summer when I visited the Soviet Union in a delegation of American writers, I discovered that in *that* science-worshiping society, delegates at the Congress of Soviet Writers applauded Khrushchev's open contempt for their efforts, and that in public, at least, the only function of literature in a totalitarian and technological society was journalism and propaganda. If the Russian literature of the 19th century made the revolution possible, the new Communist society has turned literature into advertising. Gomulka's Poland even grants avant-garde poets and writers artistic latitude, permits them to write like Wallace Stevens or to paint like Jackson Pollock, so long as they do not tamper with politics. And to speak here only of our own country, you can see that the enormous increase in our population, the predominating influence of an inflationary prosperity, the widespread leisure so often absorbed by television and the cheapest magazines, have accelerated the division into classes that are culturally haves and have-nots. You have more and more people who are indifferent to literature, who positively prefer cheap or bad literature, who are certain that literature has nothing to say to our age. Then you have all the people who, though they profess an interest in literature, know very little about it and cannot make up their own minds about a book. Yet at the same time, those who in a sense are most intimately involved with literature, who care most about it, are in such despair over the future of our society that you have, in the most prosperous and still relatively the most open society in the world, whole battalions of what the Russians call internal emigrés and what we call the beat movement—people who simply don't see the connection between their personal striving and the country at large, and who have holed up in their pads, made a fetish of external spontaneity, in order, even if they cannot write, to live like writers and so preserve what they think of as the last possible portion of their freedom.

Much of this seems to be a phenomenon of economic prosperity rather than of political despair, yet it cannot be denied that the kind of intellectual élan which we now associate with another expansive period, the 20's, and which has always been characteristic of imperial wealth and influence like ours, tends to be muffled in anxieties of one kind or another. I myself believe that we, like everyone else, are now going through such a constantly accelerating historical advance that we are unable to seize the moment properly, to see all that is happening and where it will end. Our whole sense of time has to be changed, but since the only real measure of time is our daily biological cycle, we feel ourselves be-

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ing constantly exploded into the sky like rockets. We are rushing into our future so fast that no one can say who is making it, or what is being made; all we know is that *we* are not making it, and there is no one, no matter what his age is, who does not in his heart feel that events have been taken out of his hands.

YET ironically enough, the great idea systems of the past have been so outdistanced by events that very often the only check we have on events at all is contemporary literature. Often enough now it is not Marx, or even Freud, but Eliot, Hemingway, and Faulkner, and more recently J. D. Salinger, by whom an American undergraduate tries to read the plight of the individual today. The literature that we have come to think of as modern literature, the literature that began in the idealism of the early 20th century and that perished only in the depression, the literature of 1914–1935 that now seems to us as almost the last proud assertion of man's will in a still liberal and confident society—this literature has become the great text of our teaching. From it we compose our introduction to literature for students who are separated from the last modern generation not by frustration but by the irresistible momentum of a continually changing society. As English schoolboys once learned history from Homer, so American undergraduates now learn it from Eliot and Hemingway and Faulkner.

The enormous interest in contemporary literature that one finds everywhere in American colleges today stems from this awareness that contemporary literature somehow records our fate—that not only *The Hollow Men, The Bear,* but pressingly now, "A Perfect Day for Bananafish" and *Augie March* and *The Deer Park* provide a text in which we still read our hopes and our fate. No matter how negative Augie March or Seymour Glass or Charles Frances Eitel may seem to be, these heroes of contemporary American literature are still human in the classic manner —they suffer, they are comic, they aim at a world in which human beings can live. I would even say, from my experience as a teacher, that probably nothing else in the liberal curriculum now so much touches on the lives and the real thinking of American students as these stories and novels and poems which have kept the unforgettable impression of man's effort to apply his understanding and to assert his will. In many American colleges and universities just now we have virtually no other way of approaching fundamental questions except through the materials furnished by contemporary literature.

And it has been my experience that the critic who teaches literature is now the focus for values and influence that in other cultures are furnished by the family, religion, political ideologies. Randall Jarrell once said that in America today many intellectual couples turn to criticism for the sort of guidance they used to get from a minister. Look at the way the stories of Salinger have been taken up by students, at the frenzied interest in the Beats, at the way various paperbacks become the bible of the student intellectuals. Students in America are starved for what one can only call enlightenment, for the literature that will bring the hidden issues out into the open. Just as America alone has turned psychoanalysis from a clinical method into an ethical system for living, so we fasten on contemporary literature with the same avid need.

Yet the most obvious thing about criticism in America today is that it is not consciously related to any literary movement. It does not consciously work toward a future. Look at much of the criticism that concentrates on Joyce, Eliot, Faulkner, Stevens. Are these essays written so as to suggest new possibilities for art, to welcome new writers, or are they written to explain a point in *Ulysses* that no one else has mentioned? The rebels of the little magazines, the crazy men of *transition* and the *Dial,* have become the staple

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of the curriculum. If you take the kind of essay defending Faulkner that Conrad Aiken wrote for the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1939, to justify him when he was being ruthlessly attacked, and compare it with the latest essay on Faulkner's orthodoxy of sensibility, indistinguishable from other essays on the same subject, you will see that criticism of modern authors likes to regard them as safe authors, classic authors, and often misrepresents the rebelliousness and iconoclasm that gave these authors their force. Faulkner, like everybody else, is a moralist, but he should not be used year after year to buttress Southern nostalgia. No one has ever shown quite so conclusively how dead the old South is. When Faulkner's profoundly heretical and important book, *A Fable,* came out in 1954, I was struck with how much the advanced critics joined with the professional philistines of the daily book reviews to attack it. The remarkable appreciation of the novel published by the poet Delmore Schwartz stands out in interesting contrast both to the attacks on the book and to the fawning and derivative essays still being published on *The Sound and the Fury. A Fable* is a fantastic book, literally a fantasy, for it is about peace in our time, a peace that very few really now believe in. No one accustomed to moving in the safe grooves of literary criticism was prepared for a book about the First World War by an author whose experience, like that of his generation, is attached to the last time when men went from peace to war knowing they would never return.

The trouble with all of us who teach and explain so much of modern literature is that we are too far from the kind of historical confidence, the élan, the historical swagger, that made it possible. A critic like Edmund Wilson has a kind of independence, constitutes a personal resistance movement in himself, that critics who come after him can hardly understand. Once, when I heard a professor at the Salzburg Seminar explain in good English-35 fashion that *The Great Gatsby* represents a search for the Holy Grail, I thought of Fitzgerald and Zelda diving into the Plaza fountain in New York, and was ashamed to think that no one roughly of a later generation, not even Allen Ginsberg, would do it just for fun. No one could ever confuse a poem by Eliot with one by Stevens, or an essay by Wilson with one by Kenneth Burke. These writers are all originals, and you always know where you are with them. But when, as critics and teachers, we pass on to our students, with all the latest modern methods, *The Waste Land, In Our Time,* "Sunday Morning," "My Father Moved through Dooms of Love," we can't help distorting such works by omitting something. What we omit is our own experience of the unself-conscious individuality, the relaxed independence, the natural sauciness and sassiness and exuberance of style that gives these works still—as Fitzgerald said of his own—the stamp that goes into them so that we can read them like braille. Step by step the great confidence that man could understand his time and build from it, the feeling that provides the energy of modern art, has gone out of us, and we are left teaching such books as if they were models of correctness rather than rare moments of spirit.

This is why, properly speaking, there can never be a consciously ignorant, a mass psychology, in regard to modern literature. For the essence of the modern movement is that it represents a permanent revolution of consciousness, an unending adventure into freedom. In the deepest sense, we can never study modern literature or art; we can only be part of it. That is why criticism is important. We must practice criticism on the older writers lest they harden into the only acceptable writers. We must learn to practice criticism on the newer writers in order to bind them more truly to our own experience. We must practice criticism on our age while it is still here to show us its possibilities.

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STAUGHTON LYND

How the Cold War Began

At the banquet which closed the Yalta Conference, Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin all offered toasts. When it came Churchill's turn, he

> addressed himself to the years ahead. He felt, he said, that all were standing on the crest of a hill with the glories of great future possibilities stretching before them; that in the modern world the function of leadership was to lead the people out from the forests into the broad sunlit plains of peace and happiness. He felt that this prize was nearer their grasp than at any time in history, and that it would be a great tragedy if they, through inertia or carelessness, let it slip from their grasp. History would never forgive them if they did.*

We live today amid the ruins of that hope. Any responsible inquiry into the present controversies between the United States and the Soviet Union must find its way back, from the U-2 to Hungary and Suez, thence to Korea, Czechoslovakia, the Marshall Plan, and the Truman Doctrine, and so, finally, to that time and that failure. In those months of early 1945 which Herbert Feis, in his new book,† has called "between war and peace," the hard core of difference between East and West is to be found.

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None of us can presume to discuss this question without anxiety or passion. One finds it peculiarly difficult to bring to bear on the problem of the cold war the intellectual discipline which, say, the Spanish-American or even the First World War can now readily call forth. The shrill and strained atmosphere, the partisan interpretations of war and quasi-war have been with us for an uninterrupted quarter of a century. We live, move, and have our intellectual being in a habitually clamorous climate of opinion.

Yet how precious would be the gift of seeing the cold war, now, with the kind of perspective which commonly comes only after the passage of much time. There are very few international crises which in the historian's retrospect altogether justify the ideology or behavior of any of the participants. We know today that the War of 1812 began days after, on the other side of the Atlantic, the English Orders in Council which occasioned it had been revoked. Today many of us would be ready to join Henry Thoreau in his Concord jail to protest the war against Mexico. Years after the Spanish-American War, experts examined the torn hull of the battleship *Maine* and concluded that the explosion had taken place not outside the boat but within. The blundering or hypocrisy or

* Herbert Feis, *Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin: The War They Waged and the Peace They Sought* (Princeton, 1957).

† *Between War and Peace: The Potsdam Conference* (Princeton, 1960).

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chicanery which brought on these wars seems to us today inadmissible. In short, if we could only approximate the historians' collective judgment, a generation hence, concerning the cold war, we might be helped in our understanding of the practical alternatives that are presently before us.

In search of objectivity the American student may attempt to balance the work of Westerners by consulting Soviet accounts. He will be disappointed. It is true that Soviet historians are far more familiar with English, French, and German sources than Westerners are with publications in Russian. For example, V. L. Israelyan's *Diplomatic History of the Great Patriotic War* (Moscow, 1959; in Russian) cites ten American collections of documents and over sixty memoirs and historical works in English. It is also true that the skeleton of events narrated by a work like Israelyan's is full and accurate. But time after time crucial interpretations are woodenly self-justificatory. Human blundering and groping on both sides of the Iron Curtain are underestimated. Thus Stalin's attitude toward the treatment of postwar Germany is made to seem consistent at all times; and he is said to have refused Churchill's famous proposal in October 1944 to divide Eastern Europe into British and Soviet spheres of influence because "the Soviet Union in correspondence with its policy of non-interference in the inner affairs of other nations rejected all plans for the division of Eastern Europe into spheres of influence." Inversely, the Soviets tend to portray American policy as changing from white to black after the death of Roosevelt, whereas among Western scholars even those who are most sympathetic to Soviet behavior in the cold war have stressed the vacillations and ambiguities in Roosevelt's dealing with the USSR.*

* See the final chapters of William Appleton Williams' *American-Russian Relations, 1871–1947* (1952) and *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (1959).

One turns back, perforce, to Western scholarship. Here two first-class scholars have been at work: Feis, in the two books already cited, and William McNeill of the University of Chicago, in his brilliant earlier account, *America, Britain and Russia: Their Co-operation and Conflict, 1941–1946* (London, 1953). These works have a quasi-official character. Feis's books were, so he tells the reader, in part inspired by Averill Harriman, America's wartime ambassador to the Soviet Union. They draw both on unpublished papers of Harriman's and on the unpublished papers of the State Department (these have just been closed to scholars). McNeill's volume, similarly, was commissioned by the Royal Institute of International Affairs and scrutinized before publication "by a number of individuals familiar with the events narrated." Thus the works of Feis and McNeill are something more than individual interpretations. To a degree they represent the collective memory of British and American officialdom about their wartime alliance with Soviet Russia and how it broke down.

Perhaps because of their quasi-official character the Feis and McNeill books display the same defect as their Soviet counterparts. They narrate, but they do not really interpret. They do not face squarely the childlike and penetrating question, Why did the cold war start? Some of McNeill's sharpest observations are buried in footnotes. Feis concludes *Between War and Peace* with the moving sentence: "To choose life, the great nations must one and all live and act more maturely and trustfully than they did during the months that followed the end of the war against Germany." Moving, but also banal. Feis does not go beneath the surface of events in search of the specific men and motives that obstructed the choice for life, the inarticulate major premises which led each side to a point from which further retreat seemed inadmissible.

To go beneath the surface means, as I

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have said, going back. The climactic events of the six months after Yalta—the defeat of Germany, the San Francisco and Potsdam conferences, the testing and use of the atom bomb, all shadowed and confused by the death of Roosevelt and the political defeat of Churchill—brought into the open the conflict in objectives between England and America and the Soviet Union. But this conflict had existed in embryo from the first tentative discussions in 1941 of postwar aims among the three military partners. While the war lasted, each side, intensely needful of the other's military aid, tended to avoid direct confrontation of the latent political tensions. Even at Teheran (1943), perhaps the high point of Big Three harmony, McNeill comments that "Allied co-operation could be and was founded upon agreement on military strategy. Agreement on post-war issues was not genuinely achieved. All important decisions were left for the future after only vague exploration of the issues involved." Victory over Germany, together with the decision of the Truman cabinet that Soviet military assistance was not essential to the defeat of Japan, lifted the lid of a Pandora's box.

The characteristic, continuing objectives of each of the three powers had in fact become quite clear within a year of the German attack on the Soviet Union. When the Red Army, to the surprise of the highest military personnel in both England and America, survived into the winter of 1941–42, serious negotiation as to postwar goals began. Then as later Stalin underscored the fact that twice in thirty years Russia had been invaded through Poland, and insisted on a more westerly frontier (incorporation of the Baltic nations and the Curzon Line in Poland) and a friendly postwar Polish government. Then as later Churchill, also thinking in terms of his nation's security, showed himself ready to bargain with the Soviet Union on a *quid pro quo* basis but equally ready to invoke the threat of force if negotiation seemed inadequate; it was at this time that Churchill, having just signed the Atlantic Charter with its promise of democracy for "all the men in all the lands," told Parliament that the phrase was not meant to apply to the British Empire. In December 1941, Foreign Secretary Eden went to Moscow to seek an accommodation of Soviet and British diplomatic objectives.

Here American diplomacy intervened in a way which foreshadowed future Soviet-American tension. That December, and again in May 1942 when Molotov visited London and Washington, Secretary of State Hull brought strong pressure on the English government to avoid territorial commitments until a postwar peace conference. On the latter occasion, indeed, he threatened to issue a public statement dissociating the United States from any such agreement reached between Britain and the Soviet Union. The American objective, for Roosevelt and Hull as for Woodrow Wilson years before, was to prevent dictation to small nations so that they might determine their own destinies through democratic processes; and to substitute for the balance-of-power arrangements which seemed inevitable and natural to America's European partners, an international organization to keep the peace. Thus in the Second as in the First World War, American diplomacy sought nothing less than a diplomatic new deal, an altogether new start in the conduct of international relations.

Not only in objectives but in ways and means American diplomatic behavior in this first year of the war was symptomatic of much that was to follow. Avoiding hard bargaining on specific issues, America sought—in the words of a Hopkins memo—to "take the heat off" the Soviet territorial demands by pushing hard for a second front (as well as by talking of a postwar international organization in terms which were, as Feis says, "vaguely magnificent rather than sturdy"). The United States of course had other

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substantial reasons for desiring a second front. But both Feis and McNeill make it clear that the Americans found it a "happy coincidence" that the military strategy which they favored, a direct assault on Germany through France, was at the same time the form of assistance which the Soviet Union desired above all others. The American hope, Feis writes, was that "the Soviet government was to be lured away from one boon by a choicer one, away from its absorption in frontiers by the attraction of quick military relief."

By championing the second front and postponing to a later day the inherent conflict between the American concern for worldwide democracy and the Soviet preoccupation with the security of its borders, Roosevelt established himself, by the middle of 1942, as a mediator between Churchill and Stalin. As McNeill observes in a remarkable footnote, this relationship was a personal tour de force which rested on a peculiar and indeed artificial basis of fact:

> The British public was perceptibly warmer in its feeling toward Russia than was the American public, among whom repugnance to socialism and consciousness of Russia's failure to join in the war against Japan were far greater than in Britain. On the other hand, the American Government in general assumed a more indulgent attitude towards Russia on current questions (for instance Lend-Lease), combined with a more rigid attitude on long-range issues (for instance, the question of the Baltic states) than did the British Government. The secret of this curious contradiction lay mainly in the fact that Churchill and Eden thinking largely in terms of a balance of power, wanted to bargain with Stalin, whereas Roosevelt and Hull thought in terms of abstract principles to which they hoped Stalin could, if treated indulgently enough by his wartime allies, be committed.

When in 1942 and again in 1943 Roosevelt failed to deliver on a second front, a foundation was laid for future ill-will.

Viewed in this way, Roosevelt's approach to the Soviet Union appears fundamentally similar to that of Wilson and to that of Eisenhower: personalities fall away, and the thread of a shared tradition stands forth. All three Presidents attempted to eschew diplomatic settlements based on a balance of power. Like Wilson at Versailles, and indeed in conscious recoil from Wilson's entanglement in secret wartime agreements, Roosevelt and Hull during World War II sought to brush aside concrete, immediate points of difference in order to establish agreement on general principles of world organization. Feis says of Hull in 1943:

> Over each disjointed problem the interested and rival powers were poised —ready to contest, bargain and threaten. This had been the customary way in the past by which questions of frontiers, political affiliations and the like got settled. He wanted to bring it about that all such exercises of national power and diplomacy would in the future be subordinated to rules of principle.

The Americans, McNeill agrees,

> tended to think of the establishment of an international organization as a sort of talisman which would possess a powerful virtue to heal disputes among the nations. Instead of regarding international politics as essentially and necessarily an affair of clashing interests and struggle for power, Americans, both officials and the general public, tended to think that international politics were, or at least should be, a matter of legal right and wrong, and that the common interest of all men and nations in the maintenance of peace was so obvious and so compelling that only hardened criminals would think of transgressing against it.

Alike in placing too much reliance on the forms of international organization, Wilson, Roosevelt, and Eisenhower also have shared a tendency to evolve sim-

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plistic solutions to the internal problems of foreign nations. For all three men the sovereign nostrum for the domestic ills of other countries has been, "When in doubt, hold a free election." Roosevelt grasped the awakening of the colonial world but conceived it one-sidedly in formal political terms; less than Wendell Willkie did he perceive the universal challenge to the big house on the hill. Land reform, for example, was as germane to the emergence of democracy in Eastern Europe as were free elections. Indeed land reform was a principal bone of contention between the Soviet-sponsored Lublin government and the Polish government-in-exile. Yet the Big Three paid it scant attention in their interminable discussions of the Polish question.

ONE CANNOT avoid the suspicion that Roosevelt's intermittent demand for freedom in Eastern Europe did not altogether escape the tragi-comic quality of Wilson's insistence that the revolutionary Huerta regime in Mexico conduct a plebiscite on its own legitimacy, or—*reductio ad absurdum*—President Eisenhower's recent proposal for a worldwide referendum on communism and democracy. In each of these instances, the American President expressed a sincere and idealistic concern, but a concern which did not really represent a practical alternative in the given situation. McNeill points out that "neither Roosevelt nor Churchill seems frankly to have faced the fact that, in Poland at least, genuinely free democratic elections would return governments unfriendly to Russia." Therefore, he continues,

> the democratic process upon which so many eulogies were expended could not produce governments in Eastern Europe (or in many other parts of the world) that would further the harmony of the Great Powers and prove acceptable to all of them. Men were not so uniform, so rational, nor possessed of such good will, as the democratic theory presupposed; and in talking of Eastern European governments which would be both democratic and friendly to Russia the Western Powers were in large part deluding themselves.

George Kennan has written in much the same vein of the American Open Door policy in the Far East. "Our constant return to these ideas," Kennan says, "would not serve really to prevent the conflict of interests in China from living themselves out pretty much in accordance with their own strategic, political, and economic necessities." Just so the State Department policy toward Europe during World War II, according to Feis, "tried to arrest the march of armies, the clash of civil wars, the forays of diplomacy by repeated affirmations of the view that principle should govern European postwar settlements."

This syndrome of American attitudes—a syndrome which Walter Lippman has called "Wilsonian" and E. H. Carr "Utopian," and which has been best characterized by Kennan—threw up significant obstacles to the making of a peace. To say this is not to belittle the American dream of democracy and world organization. It is not so much the American goals in World War II but the lack of realism with which they were elaborated in specific circumstances that is disturbingly prophetic of much which liberals now like to think of as uniquely Eisenhowerian. How similar to latter-day criticisms of American diplomacy's lack of "initiative" are these words of McNeill describing Roosevelt's passivity as the need for postwar decisions bore down on him:

> From early in 1942 the American Government had repeatedly proclaimed the principle that no final decisions on matters of post-war frontiers or systems of government should be made until the end of the war. The theory that a political vacuum could be maintained in Europe was absurd on its face; but this principle helped to hide from American officials the daily necessity of making decisions.

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American indecision in the closing years of the war diminished the chances for postwar settlements in both Poland and Germany. Long before Hungary, United States foreign policy was encouraging hopes in Eastern Europe which it had no concrete plans to support. Thus, early in 1944 Roosevelt refused to "back in an unambiguous manner" the proposals for Poland agreed on at Teheran, instead

> contenting himself with amiable sentiments about "freely negotiated" and "friendly" settlement of the Soviet-Polish dispute. Clearly Roosevelt did not wish to grasp the nettle, hoping that Stalin and the Poles would come to terms of their own accord. But his attitude only confirmed the Poles in their obstinate disregard of the realities of their situation, and allowed them to cling to the belief that Roosevelt would come to their rescue.

"In this instance," McNeill continues, "and throughout the following year, Roosevelt tried to avoid the responsibilities of the new American power, and by not making himself clear to the Poles he stored up trouble for the future." Thus in October 1944, when Mikolajczyk went to Moscow to consult with Churchill and Stalin about Poland, he was astonished to learn that everyone but himself had thought that Roosevelt at Teheran essentially accepted the Curzon Line. At Yalta, Admiral Leahy warned Roosevelt that the vagueness of the accord reached on reorganizing the Polish government would permit the Russians to make their own interpretation: the President could only wearily reply, "I know, Bill, I know."

Of Germany, McNeill writes that "the American Government, because of its internal disputes and indecision, prevented even the discussion of a common Allied policy for Germany." Alarmed by the furor occasioned by the Morgenthau Plan, Roosevelt put a stop to all American efforts to make postwar plans for Germany from late 1944 until his death. "This ostrich attitude towards the future," says McNeill, "prevented whatever chance there may have been for arriving at Allied agreement upon policy towards Germany through the European Advisory Commission or in any other way, and left the subordinate American officials who were charged with the task completely at sea."

IN DEFAULT of an American initiative, what planning for peace took place in 1943–44 consisted chiefly of British and Soviet attempts to divide Europe between them into spheres of influence. The story of these attempts is an important one, for it suggests that the Soviets, like the West, felt in 1945 that past understandings between the Big Three concerning Eastern Europe were betrayed.

The pattern for postwar spheres of influence in the liberated European countries was established in Italy, however, not in Eastern Europe, and by England and America rather than by Russia. In theory the three military partners were committed to joint decision-making and to democratic self-determination within every European country, regardless of whose armies were occupying it. But in fact, the Big Three tacitly recognized and accepted spheres of influence all over the world. In China, Feis writes, "Stalin and Churchill seemed willing to have the American government take the lead in directing the political evolution of that country; and the American government was assuming it. Similarly, it was understood that Britain could be to the fore in dealing with Southeast Asia." And Churchill said of South America: "We follow the lead of the United States in South America as far as possible, as long it is not a question of our beef and mutton." The habits twined about these long-standing arrangements proved too strong to be offset in meeting the challenge of liberated Europe when it first presented itself in Italy.

England took the lead. Churchill wanted to keep the monarchy in Italy, and deprecated any statement about self-determination. Russia's desire to take an

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active role through a tripartite military-political commission was deflected by the fact that Western commanders retained power, and when Russia established independent diplomatic relations with the Italian government, its move was strongly resented and protested by the West. The powers which Russia wanted, however, were the very ones which England and America were later to demand in Eastern Europe and which the Soviets denied, pointing persistently to Italian precedents. Some Westerners foresaw the result of the West's behavior in Italy; thus Ambassador Winant wrote in July 1943, that "when the tide turns and the Russian armies are able to advance we might well want to influence their terms of capitulation and occupancy in Allied and enemy territory." But this view did not prevail and the outcome was, in McNeill's words, that "in Italy, Russia had effectually been excluded from participation in Allied decision-making, and the Western Allies could hardly expect to be treated differently by the Russians in Rumania."

As German resistance began to crumple and the Allied armies poured into Festung Europa, the volume and pace of political decision-making in occupied territory necessarily increased. England began to make independent approaches to the Soviet Union looking toward an agreement on spheres of influence which would safeguard the Mediterranean lifeline and put some limit to the Red Army's advance. "Experience," Feis comments,

> was showing how hard it was to apply the rule of common consent in each of these unstable situations. And decision could not always wait. In brief, the diplomatic methods in use began to seem defective or unsuitable—awkward for war, ineffective for peace. Hence both diplomats and soldiers began to wonder whether an arrangement which made one or the other Allies the dominant authority in each of these situations was not the sensible way to end the discussion.

Churchill, more tersely, stated that in each of the occupied countries someone had to play the hand, and with this in mind he journeyed to Moscow in October 1944 to make his division of Eastern Europe with Stalin, and thus safeguard British predominance in Greece.

As in 1941–42, so in these negotiations of 1943–44 the United States preferred to remain, in the words of the Monroe Doctrine, an "anxious and interested spectator." Harry Hopkins intervened to change the text of Roosevelt's cable to Churchill referring to the latter's Moscow trip, so that the American President, rather than empowering Churchill to speak for him, insisted on retaining "complete freedom of action." The reserved American veto imparted a provisional character to the Churchill-Stalin agreement. Thus it was that Western policy toward Eastern Europe in 1945 wavered because England and America had not reached full agreement, but the Russians, as in the similar case of the second front, interpreted the wavering as simple bad faith. Stalin protested that he had no idea whether the governments of Belgium and France, created under Western aegis, were democratic; he simply accepted them. Did not the accord of October 1944, although expressly limited to provisional arrangements until German surrender, give him by implication a similar free hand in Eastern Europe?

THE FIRST test of the new arrangement came in Greece. In his effort to make the agreement with Churchill stick, Stalin stood aside while British troops crushed Communist-led Greek guerillas: in Churchill's words, Stalin "adhered very strictly to this understanding." At the same time—as Feis, McNeill, and Williams all agree—he attempted to curb the Communist parties in Western Europe, Yugoslavia, and China from bidding for power, lest such an attempt spark off armed conflict between the great powers. It was therefore something of an irony when the Chinese

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revolution seemed to the West to confirm its image of the insatiable expansionism of Russian Communism.

In the absence of firm tripartite agreements, particularly about Poland, the British government, hitherto the advocate of realistic acceptance of a Soviet sphere of influence in Eastern Europe, at war's end found itself imploring American military assistance to contain the expansion of Soviet power. The upshot was as paradoxical as it was tragic. A sequence of events familiar in Anglo-American diplomatic history then took place. As in the formulation of the Monroe Doctrine, as in the formulation of the Open Door policy, the British government suggested to America a joint declaration of policy for reasons altogether in the realm of *Realpolitik*. As in the two preceding instances, so in 1945–47 the United States government proclaimed the policy as its own and lent it the panoply of a moral crusade. Ten years later, in consequence, England was in the position of trying to restrain the partner which but yesterday it had to prod.

Looking back, it is still difficult to assign responsibility with any sureness for this critical turn of events. America, which realized the importance of creating the United Nations before the bonds of wartime partnership were relaxed, failed to see the comparable importance of more humble agreements about governments and frontiers, and this failure complicated the already inherent difficulty where two men so different in their points of view as Churchill and Stalin had to reach firm agreements. A number of prominent Americans, including Roosevelt and Hopkins, were deeply impressed by England's determination to retain its empire: this made them slow to accept Churchill's growing fear of Russian expansion, just as it blinded them to the truth that, in actual hard fact, America had always depended on the English empire to shield it from potential aggressors. Had the Soviet leaders been less suspicious and dogmatic than they were, they might well have been confused in responding to an England which did not have the strength to enforce its realism, and an America which did not seem to realize that idealism must be supported by something more than documents.

For the Soviets, such indecision on the part of the West must have encouraged the hope, championed by Trotsky after World War I, of carrying revolution westward on the bayonets of the Red Army. Advocates of the Russian interpretation of these events have quoted the Forrestal diaries to show that military leaders in the West did not really fear Soviet attack:* but these quotations begin no earlier than 1946, when the readiness to mobilize military force to deter such attack had already shown itself. Feis and McNeill reiterate that we possess very little material with which to interpret Soviet intentions in the spring of 1945. But there seems no good reason to doubt that the Russians were ready to carry their influence as far westward as they could safely go without risking the danger of war.

THE INERTIA acquired by supposedly temporary military arrangements, their tendency then to turn into a political status quo unless deflected by new agreements for which, after Yalta, the Big Three alliance suddenly seemed no longer capable, posed for the West a genuinely "agonizing reappraisal." It seemed that to keep on a friendly footing with Russia it was necessary to betray (as it appeared to the West) the Polish people on whose behalf England had gone to war. Roosevelt and Truman were not as different in their reactions to this problem as extremists of both the right and the left would have one think: the President who sent the two most pro-Soviet men in American governmental circles (Davies and Hopkins) as his first envoys to Churchill and Stalin cannot have been, initially, bitterly anti-Soviet.

* See Carl Marzani, *We Can Be Friends: Origins of the Cold War* (1952) as well as the books of W. A. Williams previously cited.

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The course ultimately adopted was, of course, containment, and its error lay, surely, in making such a "posture" the *whole* of one's foreign policy. In itself, containment was simply the normal practice of diplomacy which sought to maintain a balance of power, and supported this effort with the threat of force; England has certainly never practiced anything else, and when the United States has tried to follow another course—as between 1801 and 1812 in our dealings with England and France—it has altogether failed. Containment was startling only in contrast with the Wilsonian idealism, today almost hard to remember, which preceded it.

What was novel and alarming was the exaltation of containment from one of many normal means to the entire substance of a policy. There was nothing in the idea of containment itself which would have precluded, for example, long-term credits for postwar reconstruction to the Soviet Union. Even if this had seemed impossible for domestic political reasons, such loans might have been offered to Eastern Europe. When in the Marshall Plan proposals the offer was finally made, the international atmosphere had become embittered, Communist parties had strengthened their hold throughout Eastern Europe, and it was too late. In a sense, Eastern Europe was the first underdeveloped area where we failed.

In its sudden, totalistic shift from a reliance on ideals alone to a reliance only on the threat of war, American policy after 1945 exhibited a characteristic tendency to go from one one-sided solution to its opposite, equally one-sided. The Darlan and Badoglio deals, the unconditional surrender formula, the dropping of the atom bomb, also suggest an extremism of expediency and violence which all too frequently was the sequel to the benevolent extremism of America's first intentions.

George Kennan has shown how this tendency of American international behavior to oscillate between extremes of idealism and violence is magnified by our habitual self-righteousness.* "It does look," Kennan observes,

> as though the real source of the emotional fervor which we Americans are able to put into a war lies less in any objective understanding of the wider issues involved than in a profound irritation over the fact that other people have finally provoked us to the point where we had no alternative but to take up arms. This lends to the democratic war effort a basically punitive note, rather than one of expediency.

Again Kennan says, commenting on the intrinsic connection between self-righteousness and total war:

> Whoever says there is a law must of course be indignant against the lawbreaker and feel a moral superiority to him. And when such indignation spills over into military contest, it knows no bounds short of the reduction of the lawbreaker to the point of complete submissiveness—namely, unconditional surrender. It is a curious thing, but it is true, that the legalistic approach to world affairs, rooted as it un-

* These quotations are from *American Diplomacy, 1900–1950* (1952). In his writings of that date Kennan altogether failed to apply his general critique of American foreign policy to its dealings with the Soviet Union. Whereas he could say of American conduct toward Imperial Germany in World War I that "you could have refrained from moralistic slogans, refrained from picturing your effort as a crusade, kept open your line of negotiation to the enemy, declined to break up his empire and overthrow his political system . . ." yet these were the very goals Kennan advocated for our policy toward the USSR. Whereas in general he counseled America to "admit the validity and legitimacy of power realities and aspirations, to accept them without feeling the obligation of moral judgment, to take them as existing and inalterable human forces, neither good nor bad, and to seek their point of maximum equilibrium rather than their reform or their repression"—"reform or repression" of the Soviet system were the very goals which Kennan's influential writings of those years urged. Finally, whereas in treating America's relations with Japan before World War II Kennan noted how American policy tended to bring about "the final entrenchment of the power of the military extremists," he notably failed to see that the policy of containment he then advocated would have the identical effect on Moscow.

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> questionably is in a desire to do away with war and violence, makes violence more enduring, more terrible, and more destructive to political stability than did the older motives of national self-interest. A war fought in the name of high moral principle finds no early end short of some form of total domination.

Instances of such behavior are legion. One recalls how the "peace without victory" position which Woodrow Wilson proclaimed in January 1917—which meant, if it meant anything, a negotiated peace—gave way in three short months to the complete conviction that autocratic governments could not be dealt with and must therefore be destroyed to "make the world safe for democracy." Again, McNeill has caught this quality in Roosevelt's attitude toward fascist Germany:

> The conviction that Germany should be made to suffer for the wrongs done to the world by the Nazis was in a sense the obverse of Roosevelt's belief in the goodness and rationality of mankind at large. If a nation somehow failed to exhibit goodness and rationality, thus challenging Roosevelt's general belief about human nature, it endangered its claim to belong to humanity and deserved, Roosevelt came to feel, the severest sort of punishment.

It is as if, to sum up, the failure of reality to respond to innocent intentions (a lack of forethought as to means being itself considered a kind of innocence) calls forth a thirst for vengeance; then hope may give way to fear of an opaque reality which seems suddenly out of control; and reality be made to suffer for its intransigence.

This transition was the more inevitable after 1945 because English and American policy-makers had persistently underestimated Soviet strength, and the awakening to the real nature of the postwar balance of power came as something of a traumatic shock. One reason for the slow Anglo-American response to Soviet postwar demands in 1941 had been, as Churchill and Hull candidly confess in their memoirs, the conviction that Russia would grow weaker as the war went on. The colossal Red Army rolling east and west from Soviet borders in the spring and summer of 1945 caused latent anti-Communism to come quickly to the surface of opinion and seem sensible policy.

Only then did many sincere and thoughtful persons in the West recall that the Soviet ideology, pressed on to the heroic defensive as it had been since 1941, nonetheless envisaged the transformation of capitalism to socialism throughout the world. Revolution from within was the classical means toward this end; but Marx had never imagined a situation in which socialism and capitalism, represented by different groups of countries, would duel for the allegiance of the rest of the world; and it was a still more basic tenet in the Marxist tradition that means were, in any case, secondary. This underlying tension between opposing social systems facilitated the transformation of cautious cooperation into hostility at a time when public opinion still basked in the glow of victory, and even the leaders of the three victorious powers had far from lost hope in peaceful negotiation. As McNeil puts it: "Each of the Big Three wanted peace and security and recognized that only their continued cooperation could secure these goals. But what seemed an elementary precaution to safeguard the security of the Soviet Union to the one side seemed Communist duplicity and aggression to the other."

IF THEN, we return to the question, Why did the cold war start? the most fundamental answer might be: Because for the first time the challenge of authoritarian socialism to democratic capitalism was backed by sufficient power to be an ever-present political and military threat. It is a far more complicated and potent challenge than that represented by Germany in 1914 or Japan in 1941; it is the kind of challenge associated with the break-up of empires and the transforma-

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tion of whole societies rather than with the ordinary jostling of diplomatic intercourse. In this sense, those who now speak of negotiation and disarmament as simple nostrums are being superficial, and those who invoke the American way of life are more nearly correct.

Yet containment, while recognizing the seriousness of the problem, would appear to be an inadequate response. Even before the possession of atomic weapons by both sides made reliance on military reprisal archaic, containment was a one-sidedly negative policy which could lead only to slow defeat, and, by way of the frustration and fear thereby engendered, to war. It involved and still involves an identification of the United States with governments whose only qualification for our friendship is their anti-Communism, and which in every other respect go against rather than with the grain of worldwide aspiration. Only a narrow and superficial realism can look to such alliances for strength in the long run.

Is there a moral to be drawn from this alternation between the extremes of Wilsonian idealism and military "realism"? Ten years after he formulated the containment policy, George Kennan saw a moral clearly. "I should like to raise today the question," Kennan stated in 1957,

> whether the positive goals of Western policy have really receded so far from the range of practical possibility as to be considered eclipsed by the military danger, whether we would not, in fact, be safer and better off today if we could put our military fixations aside and stake at least a part of our safety on the earnestness of our effort to do the constructive things, the things for which the conditions of our age cry out and for which the stage of our technological progress has fitted us.

"Surely everyone," Kennan continued,

> our adversary no less than ourselves, is tired of this blind and sterile competition in the ability to wreak indiscriminate destruction. The danger with which it confronts us is a common danger. The Russians breathe the same atmosphere as we do, they die in the same ways. . . . Their idea of peace is, of course, not the same as ours. . . . But I see no reason for believing that there are not, even in Moscow's interpretation of this ambiguous word, elements more helpful to us all than the implications of the weapons race in which we are now caught up. And I refuse to believe that there is no way in which we could combine a search for those elements with the pursuit of a reasonable degree of military security in a world where absolute security has become an outmoded and dangerous dream.

*These quotations are from *Russia, the Atom and the West* (1957).

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THE CHANGING ANGLO–JEWISH COMMUNITY

I. A. V. Sherman: EPITAPH FOR THE EAST END

"THE EAST END is not what it used to be"—the theme recurs in almost any conversation on London Jewry and its changing patterns of settlement and behavior. For over half a century the "East End"—to be more exact, the Jewish quarter of the East End—had been the home of most London Jews and the main focus of their communal existence. Now Jewish life is ebbing away from it.

The change is not immediately apparent to the daytime visitor or to the tourists who flock to the Petticoat Lane street-market on Sunday morning. Most shops, stalls, restaurants, clothing manufacturers, and wholesalers are still unmistakably Jewish, and so are many of the passers-by. Hebrew and Yiddish papers, prayer books and *talleisim, beiglach* and chopped herring—all signs of Jewishness in their own way—abound; notices in Yiddish are pasted up; synagogues, *yeshivot,* and *mikvaot* are scattered through the quarter. But when evening comes the factory owners and shopkeepers—and many of their customers too—make their way home to other parts of London; the synagogues remain half empty or derelict. On *Shabbos* few Jews, and still fewer Jewish families, can be seen making their way to and from synagogue along streets and lanes which twenty or thirty years ago were so tightly thronged with worshipers that the outsider felt ill at ease.

Less immediately evident but even more striking is the decline in religious and communal activity among those Jews who have remained in the East End. The old East Enders used to be the backbone of religious life, Zionism, Yiddish culture, and the friendly societies; they saw themselves as defenders of a citadel on which their outposts elsewhere in London and the provinces leaned. It was taken for granted that visiting Zionists or religious

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Many of the forces that have been at work among American Jews since the end of World War II have also begun to show themselves in the Jewish community of England. In the first of the two articles following, A. V. Sherman describes the changing patterns of Jewish settlement in London; and in the second, Alan W. Miller finds in the recent republication of Montefiore and Loewe's A Rabbinic Anthology *(Meridian, 961 pp., $7.50) an occasion for commenting on the new religious atmosphere within the community. Mr. Sherman, a frequent contributor to* COMMENTARY, *is a free-lance journalist. Dr. Miller, a new contributor, the son of a London-born Orthodox rabbi, was educated at Oxford and at Jews' College in London and is currently minister in the Southwest Essex Reform Synagogue and a lecturer at Leo Baeck College.*

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leaders would make their main public appearance at packed meetings in the East End. Now, most of the remaining East Enders are apathetic where Jewish matters are concerned, and largely unaffected by the renaissance of religious, communal, and Zionist interest experienced by middle-class Jewry. The Zionist organizations, the Jewish Workmen's Circle, the Hasidic sects have given up the East End for lost and have concentrated their efforts elsewhere. These developments stem partly from the community's growing affluence and acculturation, and partly from demographic and social changes affecting London as a whole. British Jews are steadily becoming more English, though the process still has some way to go.

The largest wave of Jewish immigration into Britain began at the same time as the mass influx into the United States, in the 1880's, but it ended sooner, owing to the Alien's Act of 1906. During this quarter century, over a hundred thousand Jewish immigrants from the Pale entered Britain, whose Jewish population in 1880 was about fifty thousand, and the vast majority of these immigrants settled in the Jewish quarter of the East End. The area centered on the two westernmost parishes of the Borough of Stepney—Whitechapel and St. Georges-in-the-East—spilling over into the adjacent areas of Mile End and Bethnal Green. To the south and east lay Dockland, which was and still remains alien and hostile; to the west, the City of London, the country's financial center; and to the north, densely populated slum and industrial areas, impenetrable to Jewish infiltration. Squeezed between these natural boundaries, the Jewish quarter—filled with decaying 18th- and 19th-century houses and later 19th-century tenement buildings astride the main roads leading out of the City to Dockland, East London's industrial areas, and to the Essex countryside—reached a high density.

The East End, at its peak, held between 80 and 90 per cent of all of London's Jews, and it faithfully reproduced East European Jewish life. Whole streets and blocks were inhabited exclusively by Jews, Yiddish was the main language, and the few non-Jews who lived or worked in the area often adopted Jewish ways—even picking up a smattering or more of Yiddish.

During the interwar period, though no exact statistics are available, Jews are estimated to have constituted a third of the inhabitants of the Borough of Stepney. Many of its schools were recognized as "Jewish" for purposes of religious instruction, school holidays, and choice of teachers. Public notices were pasted up by the Borough Council in Yiddish and English, and the public libraries stocked Yiddish books and newspapers. It is worth noting that these libraries played an important role in the life of the community, for the drive toward self-improvement was very strong. Most Jewish parents took for granted that it was up to them to see that their children would have a better chance in life than they had, just as most non-Jews in the East End took for granted the belief that their children would simply follow their footsteps. The proportion of Jewish children who obtained secondary and higher education was immeasurably higher than the national average. Few did their "homework" at home; most of them congregated in the reference rooms of the Borough library, where every inch of floor space was crammed with tables and chairs, and a two-shift system had to be introduced before examinations.

Until the Second World War, poverty was an inseparable characteristic of East End life. A large number of the inhabitants worked in "Jewish trades"—tailoring, cabinet-making, hairdressing, taxi-driving, and retail—where wages were low and unemployment was endemic. Apart from a few thousand Council flats built under slum-clearance schemes, new housing was rare and overcrowding remained the rule. And, until

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the Second World War, the permanence of Jewish settlement in the East End was never questioned. True, families which could afford it did move northward, leapfrogging the slum areas that intervened to occupy large family houses vacated by their former owners as the residential map of London kept changing. But most families continued to work in the East End; their social life was oriented toward Whitechapel, and the loss from "emigration" was largely offset by natural increase and by the trickle of Jews from Eastern Europe who managed to find their way into the country through one means or another. Although Yiddish was being replaced by "Jewish-English," it died slowly, and the Yiddishists still were able to draw ample spiritual sustenance from both Eastern Europe and the United States.

The war changed everything. Large areas of Stepney were flattened by bombing, and many families were evacuated to small towns in the Home Counties of Southern England. The wartime and postwar changes alike also brought full employment and the opportunity to make money. The Welfare State meant greater purchasing power for the working class, and this in turn vastly increased opportunities in the production, wholesaling, and retailing of consumers' goods—fields in which the Jews had already established themselves. (Today there are comparatively few Jewish industrial workers under the age of fifty. Cypriots, Maltese, and other immigrants staff the needle trades, while cabinet-making has moved away from the center of London and into large factories.)

At the same time, bomb devastation gave the London County Council its chance to re-plan the central areas. Thus, Stepney's total population is now down from its pre-war figure of nearly a quarter of a million to less than a hundred thousand. Three- and four-room Council flats have risen on the ruins left by the Luftwaffe, and over two-thirds of Stepney is due for demolition and rebuilding. Together, full employment and planning have changed the Borough's whole mode of life.

Prosperity, for one thing, appears to have had its effect on Jewish utopianism and Gentile roughhousing alike. Zionism and Communism, two of the popular expressions of Jewish political commitment between the wars, have lost much of their attraction: Zionism has become a form of middle-class philanthropy and status competition, while Communism is discredited. At the same time the pre-war English and Irish proletariat, numbers of whom formerly sought solace in drinking, fighting, and gambling, have also been changed by their new affluence. In the municipal housing estates, which now give shelter to about a third of the Borough's population—and about the same proportion of its Jewish inhabitants—two families out of five have a car, an average higher than that for Britain as a whole. Apart from the homes of one or two Jewish families with intellectual pretensions, every flat has television. A family living in a low-rent Council flat with two, three, or even four of its members at work, is now well into the middle-income brackets, and this change has begun to affect the families' consumption and behavior patterns, lessening the difference—and the tensions—between Gentile and Jew. The East End Gentile has developed middle-class tastes as a result of his increased income, while the Jew had already acquired the tastes before the income.

WHEREAS the total population of Stepney has fallen to less than half of its pre-war level, the proportion of Jews, as compared with the mid-1930's, now equals less than a quarter. In areas which once teemed with children and youngsters, one sees only aged people, while across the street a family of West Indians is moving in. An old lady told me aggresively in near-English: "When we first came here, you did not need any State of Israel; the

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East End itself was a *Yiddishe shtot*. Then, a Jew could live like a Jew; now there are *shwartze* and Irish, and the Jews are like *goyim* too." No exact statistics are available on Jewish population distribution, but the general consensus among specialists is that there are now between twenty- and twenty-five thousand Jews in the East End, most of them in Stepney: about a tenth of all the Jews in Greater London.*

They are, as I have said, nearly all old-time inhabitants, and one can divide them into a few main categories. First, the aging people left behind by the ebb tide, who go on living in their tenements and basements. Their married sons and daughters have moved off to North or North West London, but the old people stay put—sometimes because there is no room for them in the new Council flat or suburban house, or because the daughter-in-law does not keep *kashrut,* but quite often because they prefer their old way of life in the East End to a semi-Anglicized suburban existence.

Then there are the inhabitants of East End who live in the well-built roomy blocks of flats put up by the London County Council. Nearly 9,000 of these flats house between a quarter and a third of the Borough's inhabitants, and a rough check based on names, appearances, and the *mezuzot* on the doors suggests that between a third and a half of the Council-house dwellers in the formerly "Jewish areas" are Jews. These Council-house dwellers are a privileged group. They pay the equivalent of three to five dollars a week, including municipal taxes, for a comfortable three- or four-room flat with kitchen and bathroom—only a fraction of prevailing non-Council rents, or of necessary mortgage payments if they were to buy a house of their own. Many families who could well afford to buy such a house or pay the prevailing economic rent, prefer to live for years in overcrowded slum dwellings in order to await their turn for a Council flat, and few families ever leave a Council flat unless they have moved up into a really high-income bracket. Because these dwellings are allocated on the basis of a point system which takes into account length of residence in the Borough, a family leaving the East End could not hope to move into subsidized municipal housing elsewhere, so such Council tenants most often stay put.

Still another group of Jewish East Enders is made up of shopkeepers who prefer to live near their businesses; this is particularly the case with grocers, bakers, tobacconists, and similar enterprises which traditionally open quite early in the morning and stay open till late at night. A fourth category would include those last remaining Jews working as wage earners in tailoring and the furniture trades, together with the peddlers, lesser *luftmenschen,* casual workers, hospital cases, court cases, gamblers, drunkards. Some in this group are reconciled to living out their days in the East End and will even assert rather defensively that they are proud of having stayed, and have no time for the "snobs" elsewhere; but most feel that residence in Stepney carries the stigma of failure, and still hope to be "next year, please God, in Stamford Hill" (North London). Finally, there are a number of newcomers: Indian Jews who find themselves squeezed out by Nehru's nationalization of industry and commerce, Jews from Aden, Persian refugees from Egypt, Middle Eastern Jews with British passports who tried their luck in Israel but found it uncongenial, and also a trickle of survivors from Poland and Rumania who managed to find their way to Britain. (Although the "temporary shelter" still exists in the East End, an in-

* Any social research on Jews in Britain is hindered by the complete absence of official statistics. The authorities have scrupulously avoided collating data on, or according to, religious affiliation, in order to avoid any semblance of discrimination. Stepney Borough Council's chief administrator told me with considerable pride that he and his colleagues never distinguished between Jews and Gentiles, or black and white. Democratic, but hard on the sociologist.

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creasing number of immigrants make their way directly to North or North West London where the majority of their communities are well-established.)

This drop in the number of inhabitants —Jewish and non-Jewish—is not peculiar to Stepney: most of the Central London Boroughs have experienced a similar decline and indeed encouraged it. Slum clearance, the provision of parks and open spaces, and the expansion of manufacturing industries have led to the resettlement of former inhabitants in the outer suburbs and in new towns beyond London's "green belt" of parkland. The exodus of the Jews from Stepney, therefore, has not been followed by any particularly large influx of still newer immigrants, as would have happened a couple of decades ago (and still does happen with moving groups in other parts of London). But there is nonetheless some movement into the Jewish quarter from further south and east. Colored folk—many of them Stepney-born—and Indians are most noticeable, although Cypriots and Maltese and the East End Irish, who provide a large proportion of the dock laborers in the area, also move into dwellings as Jews continue to vacate them.

THE effects of postwar England's affluence have manifested themselves in the East End in some surprising ways. For instance, although crime—particularly violence, hooliganism, and drunkenness—has been on the increase in Britain for the past decade, it has been declining in Stepney.

"When I first came down to the East End after the war, the old hands used to tell me about streets where its police had to walk in pairs, if they went down there at all. Now it's as quiet as you like." The police sergeant on duty at what was once one of London's toughest stations, who told me this, was quite free from nostalgia for the old days. "Once you saw the streets full of drunks almost every night—you could find dozens lying on the pavements; now you see much less of it, although people have more money than ever before." In other words, better housing, television, car ownership, installment plans, and the general spread of middle-class standards seem to be leaving their mark. Prostitution, for which Stepney was notorious, is still widespread, but it is carried on mainly for clients from outside the Borough. Few of the girls are Londoners —most of them drift in from Wales or the north of England and hang around the cafés, where the pimps, mostly Maltese, Cypriots, and Nigerians, find them. Sailors, long-distance truck drivers, and South Londoners on a spree, provide the greater part of the clientele—for the prostitutes, as well as for the drinking clubs and gambling houses—and, according to the police, these outsiders cause most of the brawls.

A few years ago the prostitutes moved up from Dockland into the Jewish quarter, and things became so bad that mothers refused to allow their teen-age daughters out in the evening, for fear of their being accosted by pimps and potential clients. Complaints by social workers in this area were largely instrumental in initiating the recent legislation banning streetwalkers which finally came into effect last year. (The girls have since gone underground, i.e., they hang about their clubs and cafés, or wait at the end of a telephone.)

As might be expected, crime among the remaining Jews in the East End is also extremely low; Jews have generally remained immune from England's postwar crime wave. Yet from the turn of the century to the 1930's, the Jews in East End did contribute a fair amount of its delinquency—though considerably less than the Irish, Italian, Maltese, and other immigrant communities. Jews were distressingly prominent in the gambling and protection rackets, as well as in burglary. Now the Jewish "reform schools" are empty or turned over to the authorities for use by others, and Jewish juvenile delinquents (or prostitutes) are a rarity. The Jewish

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charitable organizations, welfare societies, clubs, and settlements which once played such a characteristic role in East End life, are slowly adjusting to these changed circumstances. Charitable and welfare work proper is confined largely to the upkeep of homes for the aged, the widows, and orphans, and to helping refugees from Oriental countries who in any case usually land on their feet quickly enough thanks to full employment. The funds and energies which were once directed to aiding the ragged, hungry refugees from East European countries are now channeled mainly to Israel.

THE old clubs and settlements originally organized by middle-class Anglo-Jewry for the purpose of assisting in the upbringing of young East Enders have thus changed beyond recognition. In the early days they were apt to be barn-like affairs in permanent disrepair, with rickety furniture and old billiard tables, and always desperately short of funds to meet their current expenses and leave something over for the occasional day's excursion to the open country. But the settlements were staffed by devoted volunteer workers and filled with lively, noisy children and youths. Today they have more money than they know what to do with. For example, the "old boys" of the Brady Street Club are estimated to be worth several million pounds, and the club can have literally any sum of money it wants for the asking. It is now housed in a magnificent new building, all neon lights and formica, with fittings and facilities which would do justice to a West End club; it has a trained staff and a generous budget—but it lacks the life it used to have.

Sir Basil Henriques, who has been associated with the Bernhard Baron Settlement—the best known of all welfare centers in the East End—for the past fifty years, recalls the changes which have taken place in the settlement's work and clientele during that time. Sir Basil, a member of a prominent Sephardic family, came down to the East End before the First World War and achieved considerable recognition as magistrate in the Juvenile Court, and as a voluntary social worker. At that time, the term "East End" was still synonymous with grinding poverty, unemployment, and insecurity, and seemed to harbor unplumbed moral dangers for its inhabitants: a constant threat to the status and prestige of the old-established Anglo-Jewish community, who came to be outnumbered by their "uncouth" alien co-religionists by more than two to one. All that the settlement could do to help seemed like a drop in the ocean. Through the years, however, the immigrants and their children have become pillars of the community—indeed they supplied much of the financial aid to "displaced persons" in the 40's, and to the State of Israel in the 50's. The problems of those Jews who remain in the East End now no longer differ much from the problems of the average Londoner: how to adjust to the wider society whose pitfalls are only now gradually becoming apparent.

Sir Basil is convinced that the East End will soon lose its last remaining Jews. He points out that those families who have remained have lost none of the Jewish ambition to see their children better off than they themselves were; Jewish children in the East End still outstrip their school fellows. Large numbers of them, Sir Basil feels, will continue to win their way to Grammar school at the eleven-plus examination which divides the academic "elite" from those destined for manual work or a trade of one sort or another. From Grammar school they will win scholarships to University, and so goodbye to the East End. Even those who fail to make their way to Grammar school will not be content to remain wage earners for very long, but will set up in business on their own, helped, if they are lucky, by relatives or fellow Jews; and these people also will probably be living in the suburbs in another decade.

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Sir Basil lays much emphasis on the role played in the general social rise of the Jews by their religiously sanctified family life. The "Jewish Friday Night" is the key, he believes, to the whole thing: if that were to go, he asks, who knows what would remain?

WHILE there have, indeed, been many dire prophecies of the imminent dissolution of Anglo-Jewry, particularly by those who identify Jewishness with unrelenting Orthodoxy and Pale of Settlement *Yiddishkeit,* the Jewish community has proved itself able to survive prosperity and an increasing measure of Anglicization. As the Jews leave the East End they are not dispersed among the Londoners, but form new colonies.

The first of these colonies outside of the East End is that of Jewish North London, in Hackney, Stoke Newington, and Tottenham. Unlike the poky, crowded, crumbling houses of the East End, the buildings in North London were the better kind of Victorian and Edwardian houses, with large rooms in a good state of repair, whose former inhabitants began to move farther afield with the spreading use of the motor car. The influx of Jews led many more middle-class non-Jews to leave the area so that it came to be inhabited predominantly by Jews; and until the Second World War, Jewish North London remained largely a cultural offshoot of the East End. Now it has become a stronghold of Jewish traditional culture. The Hasidim, the ultra-Orthodox, with their *shtiblach, yeshivot, mikvaot,* and communal institutions are concentrated in the Lordship Park district on the westernmost part of Jewish North London, whose postal designation is No. 16. (As a result, "No. 16" is now used as a common expression for extreme Orthodoxy, just as "Whitechapel" once signified the un-Anglicized or the "vulgar.") The Oriental Jewish communities, too, have their centers in North London. The Persian and Bokharan Jews, mostly carpet dealers, are the longest established; a large community of Iraqi Jews who had migrated to India a couple of generations back has also established itself, and has been followed by an influx of Adenis and Egyptians, whose numbers have largely been swollen by Jews from other Moslem countries who were fortunate enough to have acquired British citizenship. The Jewish day school movement has one of its main strongholds here, and so have the Zionist youth movements, though adults are less Zionist or Israel-conscious than their more prosperous counterparts in North West London.

Somewhat before the Second World War, it became obvious that North London had turned into a staging camp for Jews on the way from the East End to middle-class North West London. Until the 1920's and early 1930's, Stamford Hill, one of the pleasanter parts of Jewish North London, had considerable prestige in Jewish circles, and represented the fruits of a lifetime's endeavor. As it became an all-Jewish area, though, its prestige fell—a process hastened by the large-scale building of Council flats to re-house working-class families displaced by slum-clearance schemes elsewhere—and more prosperous Jewish inhabitants began to drift off to newly built or comparatively new areas in North West London: Golders' Green (colloquially known as Goldberg's Green), Hendon, Brondsbury, Cricklewood, and, even farther out, Edgware and Finchley. Gradually this trend acquired momentum as the vacuum created in North London drew in Africans, Indians, or poorer Jews from the East End.

Now North West London itself is increasingly gripped by what seems to be the iron law of Jewish settlement. Middle-class non-Jews have been leaving in growing numbers, thus turning many districts into completely Jewish areas and beginning the process once again—and so more and more Jewish families are moving out of North West London and into other districts. By now the residents of Jewish

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North West London have achieved the levels of income and social standing that in non-Jewish society establishes one as a churchgoer, and among these Jews there has in fact been a noticeable return to the synagogue after the falling away which characterized the life of latter-day East End and of large sections of North London. While theirs is not a very intense Judaism—whether Reform or Orthodox, it appears to involve little feeling and even less learning—it nevertheless gives the community a certain cohesion. (In Jewish conversation, "Golders Green," used adjectively, has acquired a pejorative sense, and suggests—depending on the individual critic's values—vulgar purse-proudness, ostentation, or lack of "Jewish feeling." What the criticism of Golders Green really implies, I think, is that its Jews have lost some of the positive qualities they brought to the East End from their *shtetlach* and have yet not become English. Although there is a grain of truth in this notion, the East End was always less idyllic than retrospective idealizations would have it.)

Of course, there are islands of strict Orthodoxy even in the bourgeois North West, but they are the exception. Zionism is also extensively supported; indeed the area is the mainstay of Zionist balls, dinners, and other functions. Jewish day schools are well attended. At the same time, North West London has been strengthened by the accession of the greater part of the Central European immigrants of the 30's, whose precarious income levels were compensated for by higher cultural attainments and a truly Germanic self-confidence that even Hitler could not shake. Their background and attitudes have speeded up the assimilation of English middle-class culture—though the process has still not entirely closed the gap between Jews and non-Jews inside the same income bracket.

From North West London the movement outward occurs in several different streams. Many Jews have come to settle in the West End of London, in Baker Street and Mayfair, two of London's most expensive residential areas; others are established around Regent's Park. Still others have moved into non-Jewish districts in North West London (thereby eventually Judaizing them) or have drifted into "Metroland," the belt of countryside to the north and west of London which is neither town nor country. By now even most Jewish organizations are regrouped in Central London: the Chief Rabbi and his court; the Board of Deputies (which wrangles over communal affairs and passes resolutions on foreign policy questions that few delegates understand); the Board of Guardians (which looks after whatever poor it can find); the Board of Schechita (whose doings would deserve a separate article); and the Jewish library and museum. The Federation of Synagogues, which represents the less Anglicized Jews, still maintains its offices in the East End, but owing to its failure in gaining younger members in North and North West London, its main function has increasingly become that of a burial society. But the Jewish press has found its way to Fleet Street: both the old-established *Jewish Chronicle,* the leading community weekly, and the *Jewish Observer,* published by the Zionist Organization, write for the middle- and lower-middle class Jew in the North and North West, and barely notice the Jew within the East End. The Yiddish daily, the *Yiddishe Zeit,* held out in the East End until 1950, when rising costs and declining readership forced it to close down. It is said that its founder and editor (as well as manager, news editor, editorial writer, etc.), the late Morris Myer, used to stand at the door of his office in the Whitechapel Road, and as each funeral procession passed, would call out to his printer in the cellar: "Print one less today." This could serve as an epitaph for the passing of the Jewish East End.

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II. *Alan W. Miller: FORCES OF DIVISION*

Not long ago, an American firm (Meridian Books) reprinted a singular work entitled *A Rabbinic Anthology* which was originally published in England in 1938. As its title indicates, *A Rabbinic Anthology* is a selection of texts culled from the full range of Rabbinic literature, but approximately a third of this 853-page volume is given over to material written by the two editors, Claude Goldsmid Montefiore and Herbert Loewe. Both Montefiore (who was a Liberal—or in American terminology, a Reform—Jew) and Loewe (who was Orthodox) contributed long introductions in which each expressed, on the basis of his own very different religious commitment, a view of Rabbinic literature; there is also an *ad hoc* running commentary on the texts (done chiefly by Montefiore) and many pages of notes (done chiefly by Loewe).

A commentary can sometimes transcend its subject in value: Rabbinic literature itself, indeed, very often testifies to that fact. While it would not be true to say that the material contributed by Montefiore and Loewe to *A Rabbinic Anthology* is more important than the texts, there is no question that the book is in some respects more valuable for its wrappings than for what is inside—which is, after all, available elsewhere. Not that it is easily available, or available in so digestible a form, for there is still nothing in the English language quite equal to this volume as an introduction to Rabbinic literature for the layman. Even if we compare it with what is perhaps the greatest Rabbinic anthology in another language—Bialik and Rabnitski's *Sefer Ha-Aggadah*—it still stands in a class of its own.

The coming into existence of Rabbinic anthologies of the modern species constituted a virtual admission that the average Jew would no longer go back to the original sources of his own accord, and that only a selective presentation would encourage him to gather some knowledge of his heritage beyond the merely superficial. This much was accepted by Bialik and Rabnitski in the preface to the first edition of *Sefer Ha-Aggadah* (1908). But there for them the matter ended. They were quite proud of the fact that they had hardly tampered with the original—apart from dissolving Aramaic into Hebrew, introducing, where possible, critical readings, and providing a strictly limited commentary which reduced itself for the most part to mere glosses on unfamiliar words. Their work was somewhat amorphous, possessing an element of that inchoateness, so characteristic of Rabbinic literature, which it was their professed intention to avoid (as anyone who has endeavored to use their index constructively will readily agree).

Moreover far too many "weeds" were included among the flowers, elements of folklore and folkway that represent not the essence of Rabbinic teaching but accidental historical accretions that have been preserved more fortuitously than deliberately. To the Western sophisticated mind (to whom we may presume the book was at least in part addressed) some of these elements can be irritating, sometimes positively distasteful, not infrequently leaving much to be desired from a religious and ethical point of view.

Montefiore and Loewe, by contrast, deliberately limit their scope to the religious and the ethical, which results in an edifying selection that serves not only the private reader but also the teacher. Unlike many other anthologies of this nature it stands a fair chance of survival among English-speaking Jews who, on the whole, will go on preferring to take the spiritual values

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of Rabbinic Judaism neat rather than diluted with undesirable folk elements which become increasingly insipid and tasteless as the gap continues to widen which separates them both from Rabbinic Judaism of two thousand years ago and from Rabbinic Judaism as it stood at the end of the 19th century.

To be sure, there are certain qualifications to be made about the scholarly foundations upon which the present book rests. Scholars are still undecided as to the exact implications of the Qumran discoveries, but this much is agreed: that a large part of the standard work on the early Rabbinic and Christian periods will have to be re-written. Moreover Montefiore's constant complaint that the Rabbis were naive people who would have benefited no end had they enjoyed the good fortune to read Classical Greats at Balliol with Benjamin Jowett hovering in the background is simply no longer valid. Certainly there were naive Rabbis, but the researches of Saul Lieberman into the relation between Judaism and Hellenism in the early post-Christian centuries indicate that these were neither so numerous nor so naive as Montefiore would have us, on occasion, believe. "The intelligent Rabbis were able to demonstrate the superiority of Judaism by the means and methods current among the cultured men of their time. They were able to compete even with Gentile Christians, including those who got their education in Greek schools, in winning proselytes. . .they used the 'scientific methods' of their time and place; they were the 'modern' men of their time." Thus Lieberman. A far cry from Montefiore's:

> Another point to remember in regard to Rabbinic literature is that it comes from men whose outlook was extraordinarily limited. They had no interests outside Religion and the Law. They had lost all historic sense. They had no interest in art, in drama, in *belles lettres*, in poetry, or in science (except, perhaps, in medicine). They had no training in philosophy. How enormously they might have benefited if, under competent teachers, they had been put through a course of Greek philosophy and literature.

Max Kadushin, Isaac Heinemann, and other scholars have done a great deal in considerably modifying this extreme viewpoint.

Yet when all is said and done, the defects which the modern expert can point out in the scholarly fabric of Montefiore's work as little destroy the pleasure derived from reading his introduction as the lack of perspective in a Byzantine mosaic detracts from or interferes with aesthetic enjoyment. Indeed, one marvels that such clarity and honesty were possible in the sphere of Anglo-Jewish writing on religion in pre-war days. But I shall return to that point later.

To describe Montefiore as honest by no means implies that his collaborator in this work, Herbert Loewe, was dishonest. We do not call a man dishonest who defends his wife from the accusations (which he suspects may be well founded) of a neighbor. Yet there is a quality of spirit evident in Montefiore's: "I am sure that I love God less deeply than the Rabbis; yet I have a feeling as if my God were somehow a greater, purer God than their God"—which utterly puts to shame Loewe's half-hearted defense of the inclusion within the Singer Prayer Book of the Mishnaic observation that women die in childbirth, among other things, for not observing the laws governing relations with their husbands during their menstrual periods and for kindling the Sabbath lights at the wrong time. The love which covereth a multitude of transgressions and which refuses to admit the truth from the highest of motives is great indeed, but greater than this is the painstaking honesty which characterizes almost every line which Montefiore wrote. Loewe was never quite able to achieve this level.

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II

TO ANYONE who knows the English Jewish community, a glance at the new edition of *A Rabbinic Anthology* is likely to give rise to reflections on the extraordinary degree of change which has overtaken that community in the short span of twenty-two years. No such book could conceivably be produced today, for the world has disappeared that made possible the development of types like Montefiore and Loewe and enabled them to collaborate fruitfully in an undertaking like *A Rabbinic Anthology*.

The Anglo-Jewish community is, in the best sense of that much abused word, thoroughly assimilated to the life of the wider community or, perhaps better, thoroughly reflects the vicissitudes through which the wider community passes. Thus, one of the main distinctions between pre- and postwar Anglo-Jewry is the gradual and irresistible closing of the gap between aristocrat and non-aristocrat in the leadership of the community—a situation which reflects the egalitarian drift of postwar English society in general. An American rabbi recently visiting London observed that the most prominent English Jews—prominent either by reason of family or professional status—were far more involved in communal activity than their American counterparts. Yet many positions of leadership in the Anglo-Jewish community today are held by men who are the children and grandchildren of immigrants from Eastern Europe, while in pre-war days such positions were monopolized by members of wealthy old Anglo-Jewish families of the kind described by C. P. Snow in *The Conscience of the Rich*.

It was from such a family that Montefiore came. A fabulously wealthy man, he devoted his life to furthering Jewish knowledge and the principles of Progressive Judaism. His like no longer exists in England not only because there is no Jewish scholar of his calibre in the country today, but because wealth by itself can no longer insure the kind of influence and authority a man of his social position was able to attain in the hierarchical society of pre-war England. Even if Montefiore has been less gifted, he would undoubtedly have risen to great prominence as a community leader. Being both gifted and blessed with the privileges of high birth, however, he was able to develop into a giant whose full personal weight had no trouble in making itself felt. Such a perfect wedding of man and situation is hardly imaginable today. The contemporary Anglo-Jewish scholar is limited financially owing to the conditions prevailing throughout the community in general—he must work for his livelihood—and hence is ultimately cramped in his scholarly output. There are several scholars on the Anglo-Jewish scene who, if by some miracle were granted absolute financial security and enabled thereby to devote their lives to writing and philanthropy, might perhaps grope in the direction of a Montefiore. But this is fantasy. Montefiore stares at us from his last publication more as a man who died twenty-two decades rather than twenty-two years ago. The times have changed. The constitution of the soil has altered so basically that the seed could not flourish.

But if the pre- and postwar Anglo-Jewish community differ so fundamentally owing to economic, political, and social changes reflected from the wider community, they differ even more greatly from a religious point of view. In London—which can serve to illustrate the pattern of the country at large—the improving economic conditions created for the masses by the Welfare State, as A. V. Sherman notes, almost emptied the poorer districts of the East End and set off a migration into a rising scale of superior residential ghettos, culminating in later days to a move outside London altogether.

Parallel with this trek in social status went a religious trek: invariably social upgrading meant a diminishing of the

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Orthodox Judaism that had flourished in the East End and similar neighborhoods. But this trend—which might have been expected to leave Orthodoxy sapped and to swell the numbers of the Liberal and Reform congregations with Jews who were affiliating mainly for social rather than religious reasons—was crossed by the emergence as an active force in the community of recent refugees from the continent of Europe. It is impossible to exaggerate the impact that has been made by these refugees—some of whom came into England after escaping from Hitler in the 30's and others of whom arrived in the years following the war—on the Anglo-Jewish religious scene. On the one hand the left wing of the community was dramatically revitalized and galvanized into activity. The Reform Synagogues (the equivalent of what in America is called Conservative), autonomous, isolated, and independent, suddenly multiplied and flourished into an Association of Synagogues served almost entirely by refugee rabbis trained at German seminaries. On the other hand the right wing of the community was rudely awakened to a sense of its relative laxity by an influx of fundamentalist rabbis.

In pre-war England, the Orthodox Jewish community—the vast majority—was reasonably tolerant in its relationships with other sections of the religious community. Progressive (Liberal and Reform) Judaism as yet presented no real challenge. It is true that the late Chief Rabbi Hertz made moderately rude remarks about Liberal Judaism from time to time, but then he also on occasion made moderately rude remarks about other institutions and the former, like the latter, could easily be interpreted as efforts to pacify his own as yet modest right wing. In any case, Hertz was certainly no fundamentalist. Anglo-Jewry's Orthodox community in pre-war days reigned supreme as the virtual equivalent of the Established Church of the wider Christian community and indeed possessed many of its virtues and vices. Its primary theological college produced tolerable imitations of the Anglican pastor—mild, moderately versed in Jewish learning, cultivated, and refined, but on the whole lacking in fire and passion. In dress (clerical collar), in speech, and in bearing, the pre-war home-produced minister, as distinct from the imported Eastern European type, was barely distinguishable from his Anglican counterpart. (There are still a few survivals.)

Such rabbis were, of course, ridiculed by the minute fundamentalist Orthodox wing of the community (fed chiefly by a steady stream of Eastern European Jews), but the ridicule could be ignored and indeed was scarcely noticed. ("At Jews' College"—the primary Jewish theological establishment of the British Empire—the fundamentalist wags remarked in Yiddish, "they are not so much concerned with what Abaye and Raba actually said as with what sort of trousers they wore.") Orthodoxy was gentle. Proselytes were accepted with some few qualifications. Questions about catering and food, which now reverberate throughout the community, were rarely asked. *Kashrut* was expected, but its particular degree of observance was never precisely defined. Live and let live was the dominant theme.

It was against this background that the cooperation of Montefiore and Loewe could take place. For if the average rabbi (or rather Reverend—traditional ordination was rare in those days) was a quasi-Anglican parson, Loewe—who held the post of Reader in Rabbinics at Cambridge—was, in many respects, a quasi-Anglican scholar. He was not, it is true, strictly answerable to the Chief Rabbi, as an Anglican is to the Archbishop of Canterbury, in matters of religious doctrine. But he certainly felt morally dependent on the Orthodox Establishment and, indeed, set himself up as acting unpaid father confessor to the Orthodox students at Cambridge who were finding it somewhat difficult to reconcile their Jewish back-

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grounds with what they were learning at the university. One cannot help feeling that the late Chief Rabbi might even have approved (off the record) of his literary relationship with Montefiore. Certainly the impression we derive from Loewe's comments is of a tolerance and mutual respect abroad in the community in pre-war days between men of different religious convictions and commitments that has altogether disappeared today.

It has disappeared because a wave of fundamentalism—brought in by the refugees—has swept over Orthodoxy and artificially polarized the community. Not the rank and file have been affected as much as the leadership, and not the leadership as much as a handful of leaders, but these, possessed of a virtual monopoly of ecclesiastical authority in a reasonably closely knit and centralized Orthodox Establishment, effectively control the major part of that Establishment. In actual fact Anglo-Jewry is on the whole probably less observant today than ever before. The phenomenon of Orthodox rabbis, like generals who have lost all their soldiers, calling for a holy war against Liberal and Reform Jews, presents a pathetic picture to the Anglo-Jew cognizant of the extent to which serious doubts about the theological Establishment have gnawed deeply into the hearts not only of the more intelligent and sensitive Orthodox clergy (who dare not speak out fully for fear of victimization), but also of the wider Orthodox community who are for the most part as individuals as much related to fundamentalism as the Unitarian is related to Roman Catholicism.

Nevertheless, the issuing of a war cry has presented the community with a shibboleth which is effectively splitting the ranks of Anglo-Jewish opinion. If there are no more Montefiores alive today, so also are there no more Loewes (he died in 1940). "I am an Orthodox Jew," he wrote in his introduction, "but I am not a fundamentalist." Again: "So I feel it incumbent on me to write this Introduction and to attempt to show how Orthodox and Liberal may cooperate, without one of them absorbing the other. Having done so, by sketching the ground they have in common, it will be necessary to deal in greater detail with those points on which the two attitudes differ." And again:

> It is when we pass from the theory of Revelation to its implications that divergencies naturally arise. Since men are not vegetables, different conceptions of duty are inevitable. Mass-produced or enforced religion means unreal religion. . .Individuality must make itself felt. . . . Heterogeneity is a symptom of vigorous vitality, of the prevalence of sincerity and independence in thought. These conditions can be observed among Liberal and Orthodox equally. They are natural, since the Jewish unit is the Congregation. . .general centralization has been alien to the Jewish spirit, for in it there lies a danger to local autonomy. . .it simply will not do to say that the difference between the Orthodox and the Liberals is that the former do, and the latter do not, obey the rulings of the Shulhan Aruk. This is commonly said, but it is inexact. What we mean is that Liberals keep less of that code than do the Orthodox. I have yet to find a Jew who observes every detail of the Shulhan Aruk. . .How many Rabbis of so-called Orthodox congregations refuse to wear garments of linsey-woolsey? And *Sha'atnez* is a Biblical and not even a Rabbinic prohibition! . . . The test of the Shulhan Aruk must be applied with accuracy and thoroughness. Once we consider ourselves at liberty to pick and choose, our definition fails; our actions are dictated not by principle but by objective choice. Instead of differences of principle or of kind, we are confronted by differences of degree.

THERE is hardly an Orthodox scholar —and certainly no Orthodox rabbi —who would dare to utter or publish such sentiments today. After the European Conference of Orthodox Rabbis—in

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which British Orthodox rabbis played a leading and vocal part—recently poured virulent abuse on the growing forces of Progressive Judaism within Anglo-Jewry, not a single public comment was elicited in protest from any Orthodox rabbi or scholar. The non-scholarly and non-rabbinical *Jewish Chronicle* alone produced a dignified and tolerant leading article in protest—and was almost certainly rebuked for so doing by the leaders of the Establishment.

What has happened to the traditions so nobly represented by Loewe and Montefiore, the Orthodox Jew who could, while firmly disagreeing on many points, cooperate with and, above all, respect, the Liberal Jew? In a sense, such cooperation was bound to disappear. Non-orthodox Judaism presented no real challenge to tolerant Orthodoxy in pre-war days, and cooperation therefore involved no dangers. Now things have changed. Apart from the considerable growth of the forces of Progressive Judaism as a result of the not inconsiderable influx of left-wing continental Jewry, an insurmountable obstacle to cooperation has reared its head in the only sphere of Jewish law which still has any practical significance for the vast majority of Orthodox Anglo-Jewry and in which the Orthodox rabbinate still possess a vestige of authority which is also enforceable (albeit only to a limited degree): divorce, marriage, and personal status. A war is being waged on the rights of Reform and Liberal Jews to deal with these problems in accordance with their own interpretation of Jewish tradition. The situation has further been exacerbated by other factors as well: an increasing rigidity in accepting proselytes on the part of Orthodoxy; a serious growth in intermarriage (in itself a reflection of the laxity of genuine Jewish values throughout the community in the past and the intrinsic poverty of Jewish education in the present); the formation of a Reform Beth Din which now serves an ever growing sector of Anglo-Jewry; and last, but by no means least, the setting up of the Leo Baeck College, a Reform Theological Seminary for the training of rabbis and teachers.

In years to come when the ratio of officially Orthodox to officially non-Orthodox Jews begins to resemble the ratio in the United States, Orthodoxy will no longer dare to indulge in the kind of abuse which sees in the steady growth of Progressive Judaism not the answering of a genuine religious need in the community, but only moral and religious profligacy and a wanton dissipation of the storehouse of Jewish tradition. Until that time comes, the cooperation of a Montefiore and a Loewe will continue to remain something of a curiosity on the Anglo-Jewish scene.

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ANDREW HACKER

THE REBELLING YOUNG SCHOLARS

Over the last several years our larger graduate schools have contained within their precincts a cold war the outcome of which is going to influence higher education in this country for some time to come. The combatants are a new generation of graduate students on the one hand and their professors on the other. As a junior faculty member who is often caught between these camps, I have been able to watch tensions rise at more than one university. The chief battlegrounds are history and the social sciences, and the issues are frankly political. To put the matter simply, today's graduate students are substantially to the left of the men at whose feet they have chosen to sit. They are impatient with both the enlightened conservatism and the mild liberalism of their professors. Though this emerging radicalism is, to be sure, difficult to characterize, one explanation will be hazarded here.

Certainly the causes for dissatisfaction are not hard to trace. The senior professors all lived through the McCarthyite epoch of the early 50's, during which period they learned that caution was the better part of academic valor. If few were conscious opportunists, most trimmed their ideological sails and selected areas for their teaching and research that avoided the main controversies of the time. The impact of McCarthyism was deeper than many realized, and its effect on graduate teaching in America has persisted in a variety of subtle ways.

The students who are now Ph.D. candidates, however, had no experience of the years when "loyalty" was a pervasive issue —and for this very reason their rebellion lacks somewhat in charitable understanding. But more significant is the fact that the radical outlook is becoming generally widespread. Through the books that appeal to them, through the topics they pick for their research, and also through their beer-party bull sessions, it is clear to see that the graduate students of today have little in common with the men presiding over their apprenticeship.

One sure sign that a revolt of some sort is underway is the appearance of a "new" publication by graduate students to express their shared views. I have in front of me not one but three such new journals, all started within the last year. *New University Thought* is published at the University of Chicago, an old home of new causes. *Point Sixty* seems mainly an undergraduate effort and is produced by students at eleven colleges in the Philadelphia area. *Studies on the Left,* by far the most interesting of the batch, comes from the University of Wisconsin. All three have small circulations, and which of them will survive, or for how long, cannot be predicted. Meanwhile, they have in common

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a real enthusiasm and the conviction that what they are saying needs to be said and has not been said properly before. The themes they discuss can be summarized as nuclear war, civil rights, mass culture, the need for personal involvement.

The level of analysis among them varies. *Point Sixty* breaks little new ground—partly because too many of its articles are by guest name writers—but its protest against campus ROTC programs mixes intelligence with anger in an unusually persuasive way. The Chicago journal, *New University Thought,* tends to be factual to a fault—there seems to be a concerted effort to keep the emotions down. Nevertheless it contains an excellent statistical analysis of the lunch counter sit-in strikes, with tables showing how many participated in each Southern state. It carries a report on American investments in Cuba, which in a dispassionate way throws much light on the conduct of our foreign policy toward the Castro regime. Wisconsin's *Studies on the Left,* however, calls for a more detailed analysis for several reasons. The editors of *Studies* are older graduate students, and therefore better informed as to both worlds—of academe and of reality. Then, too, the magazine expresses, in a candid way, the intellectual foundation of the new radicalism in the universities. If elsewhere students are not yet ready to take the giant steps which are in evidence at Wisconsin, there is some ground for supposing that the thinking now going on in Madison will have an important influence over American halls of learning in the years just ahead.

THE radical tradition runs deep at the University of Wisconsin. It was the birthplace of Frederick Jackson Turner's "frontier thesis," and it put its resources at the service of Bob LaFollette's Progressive party in the 1920's. At the same time, Wisconsin has become one of America's distinguished centers of learning: for many years it has held the lead in the fields of American history and labor economics. Yet if a radical tradition still remains, the students are now its custodians. The first issue of *Studies on the Left* (there have been two so far) contains a "statement by the editors" chiding their professors for having failed in their intellectual obligations:

> As graduate students anticipating academic careers, we feel a very personal stake in academic life, and we feel that, as radicals, we are hampered in our work by the intrusion of prevailing standards of scholarship, which set up a screen between ourselves and our product, an automatic censoring device which trims and deflates and confines our work, under the pretext of what is supposed to be "objective scholarship," until we no longer know it as our own.

If anything is the language of revolt, this is it.

The "prevailing standards of scholarship" in history and the social sciences may well raise the radical ire. Since the end of World War II, professorial scholarship has generally taken two, not unrelated, directions. The first is that of celebration. American achievements, values, and institutions have been described rather than analyzed, and in terms of praise rather than evaluative criticism. Another aspect of this celebration has been the reassessing of radical movements of the past in such a way as to show that they were, after all, conservative in character. Viewing this trend among their elders, students often wonder whether Julien Benda's old indictment of "treasonous" intellectuals who put national ideology above the quest for truth is not here relevant—whether, to put it bluntly, scholarship has not been made to serve as a weapon in the East-West struggle.

The second postwar academic path has been that of methodological preoccupation. In the sciences which deal with human relations, students are required to take "into account" an impossibly wide variety of causative factors. Political and social, economic and cultural, legal and

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psychoanalytic influences—all must be conjoined in one's frame of reference. The result is not theoretical understanding, but a sense of multiple entries which attempt to satisfy all the going disciplines. Group research projects in particular have leaned on this crutch, and the approach has seemed to a good many sensitive students to be like a gigantic exercise in evasion foisted off on them by their professors, with the result that any free play of the scholarly imagination is held in rein by a misplaced obsession with "objectivity."

The revolt of the doctoral candidates at Wisconsin is a revolt against all such prevailing orthodoxies. If conservative professor-scholars have been mere celebraters, the liberals have hidden behind methodological barricades. "There is work for the radical scholar," the editors of *Studies on the Left* write, "the thinker who is committed to the investigation of the origins, purposes, and limitations of institutions and concepts, as well as for the conservative or liberal scholar who is committed to their efficient maintenance and improvement. There is room in scholarship for the application of reason to the reconstruction of society as well as to legalistic interpretation and reform." And the vehicle that the angry young men of Madison have chosen for their new departure is Marxism.

IT IS ONLY with a good deal of forethought—and even then with some eventual misgiving—that I have chosen to call this intellectual revolt "Marxist." The lay and scholarly publics are both intolerant of the "Marxist" rubric, whether it signifies an ideology or a philosophical system. Nevertheless the graduate students who are taking this step to the left know what they are doing. They have no illusions about Soviet Communism, and the Marxism which draws them antecedes the Russian Revolution by many years. Nor do they pretend to be guided by a theory which effortlessly provides ready answers to all social and historical questions. One wishes at times that there were some better phrase—something more American, perhaps. For the formidable apparatus of "dialectic" and "economic determinism" and "historical materialism" conjures up an image of an artificial system, inevitably imposing its categories of analysis on an unwilling reality. To be a Marxist, further, is to be constantly on the defensive or to talk only to the small circle of the already converted. One alternative, of course, is to point out that the American tradition is not without its own theorists of similar persuasion. James Madison and Alexander Hamilton have been called pre-Marxian Marxists, and Thorstein Veblen and Charles Beard might also be styled Marxists, although they never benefited from the inspiration of the Master himself. At least these men, to mention no others, looked on American society as a product of its material substructure (despite the fact that their writings never approached Marx's in philosophical sweep).

But if Marxism cannot be refuted out of existence, it would be because it is more than an economic theory—for it is, of course, a sociology of history, an analysis of power, a quest for a rational society. In spite of its Soviet taint, then, and against the general disapproval of the established professors of all the social sciences, graduate students have been increasingly attracted by this century-old theory. That Marx belongs to the intellectual tradition of the Western world—that he is not a permanent kidnap victim of the Russians and Chinese—must be recognized as a fact of history. Furthermore, his and Engels' writings, products of the 19th century, are clearly no less relevant to the present than the academically respectable Max Weber's or John Stuart Mill's. Graduate students—especially before they branch out on their own—are usually looking for intellectual guideposts: it seems to me perfectly understandable that the figure of Marx should again loom up as a diviner of the social order.

All this is not to say that the coming

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academic generation intends to be straitjacketed in any way. Certainly they have seen—as have the rest of us—that dogmatic Marxism is the death of true scholarship. In forty years the Soviet Union has produced no historians or social scientists of the front rank precisely because the professors of history and social science viewed their Marxism not as food for intellectual inspiration, but as national ideology. For the Russian academic world, Marxism has been the vehicle for day-to-day rationalization. In America, those who have again begun to use Marxist approaches, there is reason to believe, will be honest with themselves and the rest of us.

For one thing, the students from Wisconsin are severe critics of their own society, and they seem serious about their radicalism. That Marxism has been beyond the academic pale for the past twenty years, they know, and they know the reasons why. One article in *Studies on the Left* entitled "Objectivity and Commitment" tries to reply to the most common objections against utilizing Marxist thought. The charge that the Marxist scholar is not "objective," the author of this article (one of the journal's editors) suggests, is bogus, and in bad faith, at that. For how objective is any scholar, argues the author, including those most critical of Marxism? The vast majority of American academics claim that they have pursued truth in a disinterested manner and unhampered by preconceptions. Yet almost to a man their quest has brought them to a singularly unanimous conclusion: that true freedom is to be found, quite by chance, in the United States. Marxism may or may not be a closed system, this student suggests, but what about a system of thought which might be called "Americanism"? What objective sorting of evidence have ten-thousand historians and social scientists gone through so that virtually every one of them ends up embracing the institutions in his own backyard? The point, of course, is that objectivity is an illusory aim. And the choice between Marxism and Americanism, he contends, is probably a toss-up. He then attempts to demonstrate that Marxism is not as monolithic as it is usually made to appear. Here he shows that Marx and Engels' minds were far more open than is commonly realized and also suggests that their theory of society is not one which supplies automatic answers at a moment's notice. "The evidence drawn upon by the creative Marxist must be as varied and many-sided as the living totality that Marx himself attempted to analyze," this editor writes. "Marxism, at least as Marx and Engels formulated it, is simply not a deterministic or predictive system that can be applied to all situations, great or small."

This entire line of argument is vulnerable, of course, to criticism, and it is hard to resist the temptation to pitch in. But what I wish to emphasize is that these graduate students are hard at work on Marx in the face of strong opposing pressures from their professors. And the uses they see in their own fresh approaches to Marx are intellectual and at the furthest remove from Soviet apologetics. Curious as it may seem, it is not unfair to conclude that they have taken this step of intellectual commitment of their own free will.

WHAT purpose will their Marxism fulfill for these students? Perhaps its greatest value for scholars embarked on original research will be to cause them to put first things first. Instead of rushing off in all directions at once in an eclectic search for evidence, the tendency will be to begin with an examination of the economic forces at work in whatever historical period is under study. *Studies on the Left* is primarily a journal by and for historians; its emphasis is on the economic history of this country. But whether an article investigates socialist movements in the early years of the century, or the declining days of the New Deal, or Samuel Adams and the revolutionary period, or the mechanical reproduction of art forms —the inquiry always begins with an ex-

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amination of the relative stage of technological development and the structure of economic controls. All of the essays, consequently, have a focus and a sense of direction. It is clear that "economic determinism" can be and often has been a Procrustean bed for scholars, and doubtless it will always present this danger. But so long as there is painstaking research along with the theory, and if non-economic factors are not deliberately neglected, why should students not utilize "economic determinism"—or apologize for using it?

Graduate students, returning to the hard-headed kind of analysis once used by Madison, Hamilton, Veblen, and Beard, are, at the same time, asking serious questions about power. Among professors of politics it has become unfashionable to talk of power—especially about men of economic power—because such discourse can easily lead to disturbing criticisms or national institutions. The postwar professors have insisted that in America power is dispersed so widely that for all intents and purposes it does not exist: power is either one "dimension" out of many—a dimension usually subservient to habit, custom, and consensus—or else it is seen as being shared among such a variety of competing groups, blocs, and interests that no single agency can call the tune and all is thus compromise and equilibrium. To the uneasy graduate student, though, these explanations are but more flights into multiple causality. The hunch remains that power is far more concentrated than they have been taught to believe. Hence the appeal to graduate students of a writer like C. Wright Mills (again, despite the pooh-poohing of their professors) and the willingness to think aloud about power elites. If Marx saw undisputed power in the property-owning class, the students now see it belonging to a corporate elite. But such a statement is not so much a conclusion as it is a hypothesis for investigation.

One should note, finally, the moral impetus which Marxism has always imparted to historians and social scientists. Marx was himself a compassionate man and his quest was to bring into being a rational social order. It is not surprising that to many young intellectuals today's world seems, if not totally insane, at least heavily weighted on the side of irrationality. The older conservative invokes Original Sin to explain human and social perversity and tends to believe that most ills are given in the nature of things; the liberal, fearful of the costs which totalitarian solutions have levied, settles for piecemeal reforms whenever he can get them. Here, the Wisconsin students quite unself-consciously adopt the utopian spirit which infused Marx and Engels. To a reasonable man—to these reasonable students—racial prejudice, the nuclear arms race, the debasement of culture—all of these look like institutionalized madness. Quite simply, the human situation, the global situation, must be put to rights. For Marx, their particular class interests clouded the minds of individuals, and he had little faith that men could be educated on matters of any great magnitude. But graduate students are not revolutionaries and their hope is education: that knowledge will change society.

IT MAY be objected, again, that these young scholars have a set idea of the society they want to create, and that consequently their research will become strategy rather than scholarship. Such a result, after all, was what one experienced with Soviet Marxists. But at this juncture, at least, the charge against the graduate students would be unfair. While Marx's own analysis of capitalist democracy was but a prelude to his socialist philosophy, our home-grown Marxists are critics of the present American society but not heralds of a new one. Though they aspire to a rational social order, it is not necessarily one which calls for the abolition of private property or the establishing of human equality by political means. Unlike their

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European counterparts, these students are forced to be Marxists without being socialists—to try to be a Marxist intellectual during working hours and then to have to go out and vote for Jack Kennedy is bound to be a frustrating experience—and this deprivation will no doubt take its toll in a variety of ways. Some idea of the predicament faced by these graduate students can be seen if *Studies on the Left* is contrasted with its British opposite number, the *New Left Review*.

The *New Left Review* is very much a successful venture. Beginning in 1957 as the *Universities and Left Review*, it merged with the *New Reasoner* and now has a full-time editor, a London office, and a circulation of 8,000. It appears six times a year and is required reading matter for university students of left-wing persuasion. The journal sponsors a London coffee house ("The Partisan"), thirty-three "New Left Clubs" from Plymouth to Aberdeen, and has published several pamphlets and a book of essays (*Out of Apathy*). While its finances are still somewhat shaky, its following is impressive by any measure. Though its articles more often than not make for heavy reading (it is difficult to see how anyone without some advanced training in philosophy or the social sciences can get through them), the subscribers and club members form a dedicated group which at this time is clearly the most vigorous single body on the British left.

It is important also to note that the *New Left Review* was founded at Oxford by a group of graduate students, much like those who founded *Studies*, as a reaction against the teachings of their professors. The social sciences at Oxford seemed to the students to be particularly divorced from the world of reality. Oxford political philosophy is almost exclusively an exercise in a linguistic analysis which carries the assumption that most of the world's problems can be cleared up by a systematic study of language. Oxford politics is the legalistic study of established institutions, with virtually no recourse to sociology or the new behavioral approaches. And Oxford economic theory is confined to model building and mathematical statistics which seem to constitute closed systems in themselves. Oxford has many virtues, but what it lacks is the ability to inspire the imagination of those who are concerned about the problems of today. The rediscovery of Marxism, then, came only after an exposure to the donnish scholasticism of this ancient seat of learning.

LIKE *Studies on the Left*, the *New Left Review* is also Marxist in its general orientation, but it differs from *Studies* in being a thoroughgoing socialist journal as well. This difference means that for the *New Left Review* analysis can be followed by prescription, that when problems are posed, solutions can be offered. It is worth taking some time to contrast the political outlook of the *New Left Review* with that of *Studies on the Left*. The young Marxists on both sides of the Atlantic are confronted with much the same sorts of problems; but though sharing a common ground in the analysis of these problems, they perforce part company in the matter of solutions.

Capitalism. For the young Englishman of the left the answer to the problem of capitalism is to do away with it. The *New Left Review* is "traditionalist" on this question, standing for public ownership of the means of production, distribution, and exchange. This old-fashioned approach, however, is supported by a sophisticated array of economic arguments and by articles demonstrating how ownership and control of the country's major financial and industrial institutions give to a small group of individuals the power to decide the course of national policy. The magazine argues furthermore that only if work is made a matter of public service rather than private profit will the labor of men be a meaningful component of their lives. This solution is as old as Marx himself,

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and undoubtedly just as utopian. But it has not been absorbed by writers for the *New Left Review* as part of the Holy Writ; it has been arrived at after careful examination of life in the welfare state and analysis of all the suggestions for a middle way.

The Marxists of *Studies on the Left* are no less critical of the basic structure of American capitalism. The indictments they array go just as far and quite as deep —but there follows no call for public ownership. The analysis usually peters out in a surge of Jeffersonian nostalgia which hankers either for the days of sturdy yeoman farmers or for a world of competitive small businesses. It is curious, and not a little depressing, to find that the almost invariable remedy for the excesses of corporate activity is a call for "vigorous antitrust" action.

Mass Culture. The British are as involved with the problems of culture and leisure as we are, and the *New Left Review* has had exhaustive discussions of popular taste in the affluent society. Television and advertising are particular favorites, and the magazine is much concerned over the quality of life being experienced by the country's youth. But the whole topic of culture is posed in Marxian terms, and though taste is seen as being at a low level, individual wants are attributed to the character of the economic system. The British public is not blamed for staring at televized trash: these people are the products of a society which cramps their imagination and perverts their sensibilities.

In America the debate over mass culture has been essentially a bootless one because it is based on Puritan assumptions. Curiously enough, Americans of both left and right join hands here in chiding the ordinary person for not exercising more self-discipline or developing his potentialities for cultural appreciation. This chiding is often very severe and not infrequently descends to mere carping. Indeed, even the most dedicated of American radicals are prone to display a feeling of disillusionment: they talk as if the proletariat has betrayed them. The working man, now released from material privation, has committed the treason of failing to live up to the cultural expectations set for him by those who assisted him in his earlier struggles. What results is exhortation to turn off the TV and take up a good book.

The Bomb. Perhaps the most significant political force for the young left in Britain today is not the Labor party but the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. On this issue the *New Left Review* gives its unqualified support to the Aldermaston marchers and to the entire movement toward neutralism in the cold war. The program is straightforward enough: to serve immediate eviction notices on American air force bases and to pitch Britain's own bombs (undetonated) into the sea. The discussion is on moral rather than strategic grounds. The mere possession of such a weapon, it is argued, is a standing temptation to destroy civilization. America and the Soviet Union can make nuclear fools of themselves, but Britain should sit the next one out.

Americans of radical persuasion are, on the other hand, in the unenviable position of being citizens of a major power.* The best protest against the bomb—the only one that could win any substantial support —was the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy. But the basic aim of this group—a moratorium on testing—has already been satisfied by the Eisenhower adminis-

* Perhaps even Americans of radical cast believe that it would be unthinkable for the United States to throw its bombs away—history having forced on us a role which must be played out until Communism is contained or transformed. Socialist theories of society, in the final analysis, are seldom applicable to great international powers. Beneath British thought concerning neutralist status is the idea that socialism can only become a reality if England takes the road of a nation like Denmark and devotes its resources to putting its own house in order. So long, then, as America is driven by military imperatives and global responsibilities, there seems little likelihood that socialist prescriptions will take hold.

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tration. The Committee, to be sure, never even got to first base with American students—its policy was too sane, too sweetly reasonable. Yet *Studies on the Left* offers nothing more radical.

Black Men and White Men. What the state of Mississippi represents for Americans, the Union of South Africa signifies for Great Britain. Once again, the over-all view of the young British left is quite simple: white authority in Africa must step down. The socialists in London ask that the white settlers either accept majority rule—that is, black rule—or return to England, for the future of Africa lies with self-government by the natives. Such a change will, of course, produce difficult periods of adjustment and not infrequently violence. But the pacifism manifested by the *New Left* group when they are discussing the Bomb is seldom in evidence when they consider Africa. In the latter case, it is a Marxist view of history that is invoked: the quest for freedom is bound to be revolutionary; a "dictatorship of the proletariat" will invariably follow, lasting until the African nations give up their tribal anarchy and the purported counterrevolutionaries are eliminated. The problem of Africa, however, is one the Africans must work out for themselves. Thus, the role of Britain is to withdraw support from the settler oligarchies and let history take its course.

Americans of the Marxist left have no such grand historical design to apply to the racial problems of the U.S. For one thing, the Negroes in the South can hardly win their freedom without outside aid. For another, the states below the Mason and Dixon line cannot be cut off from the Union. American radicals never applauded in any sustained way President Eisenhower's decision to send the 101st Airborne into Little Rock. This use of the power of the state to enforce the Constitution was always looked upon with mixed feelings, and it has never been considered a precedent which might profitably be used again. In short, there is no radical program on civil rights, only an annual debate on the half-hearted proposals submitted to the Congress. Radicals have allowed others to define the issues for them, and the radical graduate students on *Studies* are no different. For radicals the problem of civil rights admits of no solution precisely because they refuse to postulate that the South is engaging in an act of Constitutional nullification. Emotional involvement with the plight of the Negro cannot function as a political strategy.

THUS we see that the outlook of the British *New Left Review,* compared with the American *Studies on the Left,* is decidedly utopian. Its socialism and pacifism are not so much policies for the present as they are goals for a remote future. Yet even so these goals are concrete ones, for the young British socialists have a fairly distinct image of the kind of country and the kind of world they would like to see and to have; they express their faith in the progress of history, and they have not lost confidence in the ordinary man. Their Marxism gives them—if nothing else—a sense of direction and a feeling of political purposiveness. It is on just these counts that young Americans of the radical persuasion are at a distinct disadvantage. Though their critical faculties are highly sophisticated, they cannot apply their minds to imagining the outlines of a new social order for America.

It is true that what others have to offer dissatisfies them. In their view the popular commentaries of Vance Packard and William H. Whyte, Jr., are superficial descriptions of social class and organized power, and the more academic studies of David Riesman and John Kenneth Galbraith stop short of a genuine probe into the social structure. Yet these students also assume, however implicitly, that socialism—whether of a utopian or a pragmatic character—is not a conceivable next step to think about—either for themselves or for anyone else. It is not enough to call on young people—as David Riesman is cur-

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rently doing—to embark on utopian thinking. What is required are some actual utopias: some concrete pictures of a new and better social order. If these are not forthcoming, the reasons are not hard to unearth.

Even in our age of affluence, it is possible to criticize the irrationality of the capitalist economy; but the proposal of a thoroughgoing substitute finds no ready audience. Though the system might be essentially irrational, it has done the job that most people seem to expect of it. The stark fact is that the American working class is relatively contented with the economic status quo, and finds no attraction in radical politics. While steelworkers, for example, may have no love for their employers and might be willing to strike for many months to raise their living standard to what they feel is a decent level, even these workers do not regard themselves as being exploited by the system as a whole. In Britain, on the other hand, the working class constitutes at least half the population, and it maintains a feeling of self-identity—in spite of higher wages and increased comforts.

Furthermore, the English Labor party still retains the loyalty of the vast majority of British workers; and it is an ongoing organization to which the young intellectual may attach himself. It was Marx himself who saw that the man of ideas could not be satisfied detached from any political role. For socialists, the intellectual can only play a meaningful part if he is in the vanguard of the proletariat. But what, as in the case of America, if there is no class-conscious proletariat with which to affiliate? If there are no big battalions of protest, then the intellectual lacks not only an audience but also a potential mass following. Another consequence of such a situation for American radicals, as I have noted, is the strong temptation to accuse the working man of betraying his historic mission. And once this kind of disillusionment arises within the circle of the intellectuals, the idea of a radical movement seems even more remote. Such disillusionment bespeaks, not a possible alliance between intellectuals and workers, but, instead, serious tension.

Finally, the fluidity of America's class structure—especially for those with college degrees—means that we have few Angry Young Men devoting their energies to attacking a social system which has shut them out. In Britain there is far less chance for young intellectuals to display their talents, and they can thus turn their personal grievances into a call for a new kind of society. The editors of the *New Left Review,* while hardly unemployed, are the sort of people who are not wanted in respectable university circles—in any event the number of academic posts available are deplorably few. A graduate student at an American university, on the other hand, usually finds a well-paying assistant professorship waiting for him and from that point a recognized and acceptable career. The public acceptance of the professor has proved at times to be almost embarrassing. It is an uphill fight to think about reconstructing a society which treats one so well.

Yet despite all these obstacles to utopian thinking, the intellectual awakening symbolized by *Studies on the Left* at Wisconsin is beginning to be felt throughout our graduate schools. What this generation of students will eventually have to ask themselves is whether it is possible to be a theoretical Marxist without being a socialist. The answer is worth waiting for, if only because these young men and women will be the college and university professors of the next generation. Their revolt against the professors has only just begun: what they do when they come to power in our universities—and their coming to power is only a matter of time—will have an important bearing on the intellectual life of our country.

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HANNAH ARENDT

REVOLUTION & PUBLIC HAPPINESS

THE purpose of the following reflections is to rehabilitate the word "revolution." No other word, except perhaps "freedom," will be more urgently needed in the years to come, and no other word, without exception, has been more gravely compromised by the events of the 20th century. The end of colonialism and imperialism is leading one people after another "to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them." And although natural law, right reason, and the inalienable rights of man no longer carry the weight of self-evident truth, yet wherever political bands of subordination and servitude are dissolved, in peace or in war, by violence or by mutual agreement, in rebellion against a foreign or a native ruler, a "revolution" has taken place.

As a political term, the word "revolution" was unknown before the modern age. It received its full meaning in the two great events of the late 18th century which have remained the classical examples of what revolutions can and cannot achieve. Historically speaking, the success of the American Revolution and the failure of the French Revolution are equal in importance. The success of the American Revolution consisted in the framing of a constitution and the founding of a republic; it was a political revolution that did not involve a social upheaval. With the wisdom of hindsight, we can say that this was made possible by the simple fact of the New World's prosperity. Conversely, the men of the French Revolution met with failure because they had to act under conditions of general poverty, and thus were driven to deal with the "social question," by means which they deemed to be political, but which were actually the means of violence. But the failure of the French Revolution did not prevent it from establishing a revolutionary tradition for the whole world; the sad truth is that the American Revolution has remained a local event whereas the French Revolution set the pattern for all the revolutions which followed it, even up to our own day.

Yet before all this came to pass, and even before the men of the American Revolution and the men of the French Revolution had finally been forced apart by the course of revolutionary events, there had existed a community of principle between the New World and the Old World—at least in the minds of those men who eventually were to be the chief actors in the two revolutions. These principles we may call the principles of revolution regardless of the very different historical developments which they eventually set in motion. Moreover, they had nothing to do with the social question

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which, in its various aspects, became so important in the 19th century; they had even less in common with the isms and ideologies that have emerged in the course of the last hundred years—that is, with nationalism and imperialism, with socialism, communism, and capitalism.

IF THE men who, on both sides of the Atlantic, were prepared for the revolution had anything in common prior to the events which were to determine their lives, to shape their convictions, and eventually to draw them apart, it was a passionate concern for public freedom. This concern was probably even then, in the century of mercantilism and an undoubtedly very progressive absolutism, rather old-fashioned. Moreover, these men were by no means bent upon revolution, but, as John Adams put it, "called without expectation and compelled without previous inclination"; and as Tocqueville testifies for France, "the very notion of a violent revolution had no place in [their] mind; it was not discussed because it was not conceived." Yet, against Adams's word stands his own testimony that "the revolution was effected before the war commenced," not because of any specifically revolutionary or rebellious spirit but because the inhabitants of the colonies were "formed by law into corporations, or bodies politic," and possessed "the right to assemble . . . in their town halls, there to deliberate upon the public affairs"; it was "in these assemblies of towns or districts that the sentiments of the people were formed in the first place." And against Tocqueville's remark stands Chateaubriand's observation that the revolution in France "was accomplished before it occurred," and, more importantly, Tocqueville's own insistence on "the taste" or "the passion" for public freedom which he found widespread in France before the outbreak of the revolution, predominantly in fact in the minds of those who had no conception of revolution and no premonition of their own role in the one to come.

Even at this point, the difference between the Europeans and the Americans, whose minds were still under the influence of an almost identical tradition, was conspicuous and important. What was a passion and a "taste" in France clearly was an experience in America, and the American usage which, especially in the 18th century, spoke of "public happiness" where the French spoke of "public freedom," suggests this difference quite appropriately. For the Americans knew that public freedom consisted in having a share in the public business, and that the activities connected with this business, far from constituting a burden, gave those who discharged them a feeling of happiness they could acquire nowhere else. The Americans knew very well—and John Adams was bold enough to formulate this knowledge time and again—that the people went to the town assemblies (as their representatives later were to go to the famous Conventions) not altogether from duty nor to serve their own interests, but most of all because they enjoyed the discussions, the deliberations, and the making of decisions. Compared to this American experience, the preparation of the French men of letters who were to make the revolution was theoretical in the extreme; no doubt, "the play-actors" of the French Assembly also enjoyed themselves—although they would hardly have admitted it and certainly had no time to reflect upon this side of an otherwise grim business. The French revolutionists had no experiences to fall back upon, only ideas and principles untested by reality to guide and inspire them, and these had all been conceived, formulated, and discussed before the revolution took place. Even Robespierre's theory of revolutionary dictatorship, though it was prompted by the experiences of revolution, found its legitimation in the well-known Roman republican institution; and apart from this theory there was hardly anything new added during these years to the body of 18th-century political thought. It is well

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known how much, notwithstanding their deep sense of the novelty of their enterprise, the American founding fathers prided themselves on having merely applied boldly and without prejudice what had been discovered long before; they considered themselves masters of political science because they dared and knew how to apply the accumulated wisdom of the past. But, that the revolution consisted chiefly in the application of certain rules and verities of the political science of the 18th century, is at best a half-truth even in America, and less in France, where unexpected events so early interfered with and ultimately defeated the constitution and the establishment of permanent institutions. Still, without the enthusiastic and sometimes slightly comical erudition of the revolutionists in political theory, no revolution would have been effected, either in America or France.

THE series of revolutions following upon the two great revolutions of the 18th century confirms almost beyond doubt that the breakdown of authority in any given country is followed by revolution only where new men are prepared for and eager to assume power—eager, among other things, to apply what they have learned by study and thought. The 18th century called these men *hommes de lettres,* men of letters, and this still is a better name for them than our term "intellectuals," under which we now habitually subsume a class of professional scribes and writers whose labors are needed by the ever expanding bureaucracies of modern government, business administration, and mass entertainment.

The distinction between the *hommes de lettres* and the class of the intellectuals by no means rests only on an obvious difference in quality; more important in our context is the fundamentally different attitude these two groups have shown, ever since the 18th century, toward that curious and somewhat hybrid realm which the modern age interjected between the older and more genuine realms of the public or political on the one side, and the private on the other. Indeed, the intellectuals are, and always have been, part and parcel of the social realm, to which as a group they even owe their existence and prominence; the men of letters, by contrast, started their careers by withdrawing from society—first from the society of the royal court and later from the society of the salon. They educated and cultivated their minds in a freely chosen seclusion, thus putting themselves at a calculated distance from the social realm as well as the political (from which they were excluded in any case) in order to look upon both in perspective. It is only from about the middle of the 18th century that we find the men of letters in open rebellion against society and its prejudices. Precedent for this pre-revolutionary defiance can be found in the considered and deliberate contempt for society which was the source of Montaigne's wisdom, which sharpened Pascal's thoughts, and which left its traces upon many pages of Montesquieu. This, of course, is not to deny the enormous difference in mood and style between the contemptuous disgust of the aristocrat and the resentful hatred of the plebeian; but the object of both attitudes, we must remember, was more or less the same.

Moreover, no matter to which "estate" the men of letters may have belonged, they were free from the burden of poverty; unsatisfied by whatever prominence the state or the society of the *ancien régime* might have granted them, they felt their leisure to be a burden rather than a blessing, a forced exile away from the realm of true freedom, rather than that freedom from politics which philosophers since antiquity have claimed for themselves in order to pursue activities they deemed to be higher than those which engage men in public business. In other words, the leisure of the *hommes de lettres* was the Roman *otium* and not the Greek *skhole,* an enforced inactivity, a "languishing in idle retirement" where philosophy was sup-

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posed to deliver some "cure for grief" (a *doloris medicinam* as Cicero called it), and they were still quite in the Roman style when they began to employ their leisure in the interest of the *res publica, "la chose publique,"* as the 18th century, translating literally from the Latin, named the realm of public affairs. Hence, the men of letters turned to the study of Greek and Roman authors, but not—and this is decisive—for the sake of whatever eternal wisdom or immortal beauty the books themselves might contain, but almost exclusively to learn about ancient political institutions. It was their search for political freedom—i.e. the power to participate in public affairs—not their quest for truth, that led them back to antiquity, and their reading served to give them the concrete elements with which to think and dream of such freedom. Had they known in actual experience what public freedom meant for the individual citizen, they might have agreed with their American colleagues and spoken of "public happiness," for one needs only to recall the rather common American definition of public happiness—for instance in the words of Joseph Warren in 1772—as depending "on virtuous and unshaken attachment to a free Constitution," to realize how closely related the actual contents of the apparently different formulae must have been. Public or political freedom, and public or political happiness, were the inspiring principles which prepared the minds of those who later did what they never had expected to do—that is, make a revolution —and who more often than not were compelled toward acts for which they had no previous inclination.

THE MEN in France who formulated the principles of the coming revolution are known as the *philosophes* of the Enlightenment, although the name is rather misleading: for their significance in the history of philosophy is negligible, and their contribution to the history of political thought nowhere approaches that of their great predecessors of the 17th and early 18th centuries. However, their importance in the context of revolution is great; it lies in their having used the word freedom with a new, hitherto almost unknown emphasis on *public* freedom: an indication that they understood by the term something very different from that free will or free thought philosophers had known and discussed since Augustine. Freedom, as conceived by the *philosophes,* was not an inner realm into which men might escape at will from the pressures of the world, nor was it the *liberum arbitrium* which makes the will choose between alternatives. Freedom for them could exist only in public; it was a tangible, worldly reality, something created by men to be enjoyed by men—that man-made public space or market place which antiquity had known as the area in which freedom appears and becomes visible to all—rather than a gift or a capacity.

For the absence of political freedom under the rule of the enlightened absolutism of the 18th century did not consist so much in the denial of specific personal liberties (at least for the members of the upper classes) as in the fact "that the world of public affairs was not only hardly known to them but was invisible" (Tocqueville, *Ancien Régime*). What the *hommes de lettres* shared with the large masses of the poor, quite apart from any compassion with their suffering, was obscurity; that is, the public realm was invisible to them and they lacked an arena in which they themselves could become visible and be of significance. What distinguished them from the poor was that they had been offered, by virtue of birth and circumstances, the social substitute for political significance, which is consideration, and their personal distinction lay precisely in their having refused to settle in "the land of consideration" (as Henry James calls the domain of society), opting rather for the secluded obscurity of privacy where they could at least entertain and nourish their passion for significance

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and freedom. To be sure, this passion for freedom for its own sake, for the sole "pleasure to be able to speak, to act, to breathe" as Tocqueville put it, can arise only where men are already free in the sense that they do not have a master. The trouble is that this passion for public or political freedom can so easily be misunderstood for the perhaps far more vehement, although politically sterile, passionate hatred of masters, the longing of the oppressed for liberation. Such hatred, no doubt, is as old as recorded history and probably even older; it has, however, never yet resulted in revolution since it is incapable of even grasping, let alone realizing, the central idea of revolution, which is the founding of freedom—the foundation of a body politic that guarantees the space for freedom to appear.

UNDER modern conditions, the act of founding is identical with the framing of a constitution, and the calling of constitutional assemblies has quite rightly become the hallmark of revolution ever since the Declaration of Independence initiated the writing of constitutions for each of the American states and finally for the Union as a whole. (It is probable that this American precedent inspired the famous Oath of the Tennis Court in which the Third Estate swore that it would not disband before a constitution was written and duly accepted by the royal power.) Another hallmark of revolutions in our time is the tragic fate which awaited the first constitution in France: neither accepted by the king nor ever commissioned or ratified by the nation, the Constitution of 1791 remained a piece of paper, of more interest to the learned and the experts than to the people. Its authority was shattered even before it went into effect, and it was followed in quick succession by a whole series of constitutions until the very notion of constitution disintegrated beyond recognition. The deputies of the French Assembly who had declared themselves a permanent body and then, instead of taking their resolutions and deliberations back to the people, cut themselves adrift from their constituent powers, did not become founders or founding fathers, but they certainly were the ancestors of generations of experts and politicians to whom constitution-making was to become a favorite pastime because they had neither power nor a share in the shaping of events. It was in this process that the act of constitution-making lost its significance, and that the very notion of constitution came to be associated with a lack of reality and realism, with an overemphasis on legalism and formalities.

We today are still under the spell of this historical development, and so may find it difficult to understand that revolution on the one hand, and constitution and foundation on the other, are somewhat like correlative conjunctions. To the men of the 18th century, however, it was still a matter of course that they needed a constitution in order to lay down the boundaries of the new political realm and to define the rules within it; that they had to found and build a new political space within which the "passion for public freedom" or the "pursuit of public happiness" would receive free play for generations to come, so that their own "revolutionary" spirit could survive the actual end of the revolution. However, even in America where the foundation of a new body politic succeeded and where therefore, in a sense, the revolution achieved its actual end, this second task of revolution (to assure the survival of the spirit out of which the act of foundation sprang, to realize the principles which inspired it) was frustrated almost from the beginning. One of the forces, at least, that caused this failure can perhaps be found in the very use of the term "pursuit of happiness" that Jefferson himself, in the Declaration of Independence, had substituted for "property" in the old formula of "life, liberty and property," which was used to define civil, as distinct from political, rights.

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WHAT makes Jefferson's substitution suggestive is that he did not use the then current term "public happiness," which was probably a significant American variation of the conventional idiom in royal proclamations where "the welfare and the happiness of our people" quite explicitly meant the private welfare of the subjects and their private happiness. The pre-revolutionary insistence on *public* happiness was revolutionary in essence because it insisted on the citizens' right to a share in the public power as distinct from the subjects' right to be protected by the government and even against the public power. Even more important in our context, the very fact that the term "happiness" was chosen in laying claim to a share in public power indicated very strongly that there existed such a thing as "public happiness," and that men therefore could not be altogether "happy" if their happiness was located and enjoyed only in private life. The Declaration of Independence no doubt intends us to hear the term "pursuit of happiness" in its twofold meaning: private happiness as well as the right to public happiness, the pursuit of well-being as well as the right to appear in public. Jefferson himself was convinced that the happiness found in public life was the surest, perhaps the only guaranty of the new body politic. For "when there shall not be a man in the State who will not be a member of some one of its councils, great or small, he will let the heart be torn out of his body sooner than his power be wrested from him by a Caesar or Bonaparte." But the rapidity with which the second meaning was forgotten and the term used and understood without its original qualifying adjective may well be the standard by which to measure, in America no less than in France, the loss of the original meaning and the oblivion of the spirit that had been manifest in the revolution.

What happened, finally, in France is now known to us in the form of a great tragedy. Those who desired liberation from their masters or from necessity (the great master of their masters) rushed to the assistance of those who desired to found a space for public freedom—with the inevitable result that priority had to be given to liberation and the men of the revolution came to pay less and less attention to what they had originally considered to be their most important business, the framing of a constitution. Tocqueville again is quite right when he remarks that "of all ideas and sentiments which prepared the Revolution, the notion and the taste of public liberty strictly speaking have been the first ones to disappear." And yet, was Robespierre's profound unwillingness to put an end to the revolution not due in part to his conviction that "constitutional government is chiefly concerned with civil liberty, revolutionary government with public liberty"? Must he not have feared that the end of revolutionary power and the beginning of constitutional government would spell the end of "public liberty"? That the new public space would wither away after it had suddenly burst into life and intoxicated them all with the wine of action which, as a matter of fact, is the same as the wine of freedom?

Whatever the answers to these questions may be, Robespierre's clear-cut distinction between civil and public liberty bears an obvious resemblance to the vague, conceptually ambiguous American use of the term "happiness." Preceding both revolutions, it had been in terms of civil liberties and public freedom, or of the people's welfare and public happiness, that the *hommes de lettres* on either side of the Atlantic had tried to answer the old question: What is the end of government? That under the impact of revolution, the question now became "What is the end of revolution and revolutionary government?" was natural enough, although it happened only in France. In order to understand the answers given to this new question, it is important not to overlook the fact that the men of the revolutions,

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preoccupied as they had been with the phenomenon of tyranny—which deprives its subjects of both civil liberties and public freedom, of both private welfare and public happiness, and therefore tends to obliterate the distinguishing line between them—were able to discover the sharpness of the distinction between private interests and the common weal only in the course of the revolutions, during which the two principles came into conflict. This conflict, although the same in both revolutions, assumed very different expressions. For the American Revolution, it was a question of whether the new government was to constitute a realm of its own for the "public happiness" of its citizens, or whether it had been derived solely to serve and insure their pursuit of private happiness more effectively than had the old regime. For the French Revolution, it was a question of whether the end of revolutionary government lay in the establishment of a "constitutional government" which would terminate the region of public freedom through a guarantee of civil liberties and rights, or whether, for the sake of "public freedom," the revolution should be declared in permanence. The guarantee of civil liberties and of the pursuit of private happiness had long been regarded as essential in all non-tyrannical governments where the rulers governed within the limits of the law. If nothing more was at stake, then the revolutionary change of government, the abolition of monarchy and the establishment of republics, must be regarded as accidents, provoked by no more than the wrongheadedness of the old regimes. Were this the case, reforms and not revolution, the exchange of a bad ruler for a better one rather than a change of government, should logically have followed.

As a matter of fact, the rather modest beginnings of both revolutions suggest that nothing more was originally intended than reforms in the direction of constitutional monarchies, even though the experience of the American people in the realm of "public happiness" must have been considerable prior to their conflict with England. The point, however, is that both the French and the American revolutions were very quickly driven to an insistence on the establishment of republican governments, and this insistence, together with the new violent antagonism of monarchists and republicans, grew directly out of the revolutions themselves. The men of the revolutions, at any rate, had made their acquaintance with "public happiness," and the impact of this experience had been sufficiently profound for them to prefer under almost any circumstances —should the alternatives unhappily be put to them in such terms—public freedom to civil liberties or public happiness to private welfare. Behind Robespierre's theories, which foreshadow the revolution declared in permanence, one can discern the uneasy, alarmed, and alarming question that was to disturb almost every revolutionary after him: if the end of revolution and the introduction of constitutional government spelled the end of public freedom, was it then even desirable to end the revolution?

Had Robespierre lived to watch the development of the new government of the United States, where the revolution had never seriously curtailed civil rights and, perhaps for this reason, succeeded precisely where the French Revolution failed, namely in the task of foundation (where, moreover and in this context most importantly, the founders had become rulers so that the end of revolution did not spell the end of their "public happiness"), his doubts might still conceivably have been confirmed. For the emphasis shifted almost at once from the contents of the Constitution—that is, the creation and partition of power, and the rise of a new realm where, in the words of Madison, "ambition would be checked by ambition" (the ambition, of course, to excel and be of "significance," not the ambition to make a career)—to the Bill

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of Rights which contained the necessary constitutional restraints upon government; it shifted, in other words, from public freedom to civil liberty, or from a share in public affairs for the sake of public happiness to a guarantee that the pursuit of private happiness would be protected and furthered by public power. Jefferson's new formula—so curiously equivocal from the beginning, recalling both the assurances of royal proclamations with their emphasis on the people's private welfare (which implied their exclusion from public affairs) and the current pre-revolutionary phrase of "public happiness"—was almost immediately deprived of its double sense and understood as the right of citizens to pursue their personal interests and thus to act according to the rules of private self-interest. And these rules, whether they spring from dark desires of the heart or from the obscure necessities of the household, have never been notably "enlightened."

IN ORDER to understand what happened in America one need only recall the outrage of Crèvecoeur, that great lover of American pre-revolutionary equality and prosperity, when his private happiness as a husbandman was interrupted by the outbreak of war and revolution—"demons" he considered to have been "let loose against us" by "those great personages who are so far elevated above the common rank of men" that they cared more for independence and the foundation of the republic than for the interests of husbandmen and householders. This conflict between private interests and public affairs played an enormous role in both revolutions, and generally speaking, one can say that the men of the revolutions were those who, out of their genuine love for public freedom and public happiness rather than out of any self-sacrificing idealism, consistently thought and acted in terms of public affairs. In America (whose existence as a country had originally been staked upon a contest of principle, and where rebellion had finally broken out over measures of trivial economic significance), the Constitution was ratified even by those who—in debt to British merchants to whose suits the Constitution would open the federal courts—had much to lose in terms of private interest, indicating that the founders had a majority of the people on their side at least throughout the revolution. Yet even during this period, one can clearly see how, from start to finish, Jefferson's drive for a place of public happiness (his "elementary republics of the wards") and John Adams's passion for "emulation," his *spectemur agendo* ("let us be seen in action," that is, let us have a space where we are seen and can act) came into conflict with ruthless and fundamentally anti-political desires to be rid of all public cares and duties; to establish a mechanism of government administration through which men could control their rulers and still enjoy the advantages of monarchical government to be "ruled without their own agency"; to have "time not required for the supervision or choice of the public agents, or the enactment of laws," so that "their attention may be exclusively given to their personal interests" (James Fenimore Cooper).

The outcome of the American Revolution, as distinct from the purposes which started it, has always been ambiguous and the question of whether the end of government was to be prosperity or freedom has never been settled. The question, of course, by no means presented itself as a clear-cut issue either in the minds of the American founders or the French revolutionaries, but from this it does not follow that it was not present. There has always been not only a difference but an antagonism between those who, in the words of Tocqueville, "seem to love liberty and only hate their masters," and those who know that *"Qui cherche dans la liberté autre chose qu'elle-même est fait pour servir"* ("he who looks for anything in freedom but freedom itself is fit only for a servant").

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The extent to which the ambiguous character of the revolutions had derived from an equivocal attitude in the minds of the revolutionaries is perhaps best illustrated by those oddly self-contradicting formulations which Robespierre enunciated as the "Principles of Revolutionary Government." He started by defining the aim of constitutional government as the preservation of the republic which the revolutionary government had founded for the purpose of establishing public freedom. Yet, no sooner had he defined the chief aim of constitutional government as " the preservation of public freedom" than he turned about, as it were, and corrected himself: "Under constitutional rule it is almost enough to protect the individuals against the abuses of public power." With this second sentence, power is still public and in the hands of government, but the individual has become powerless and must be protected against the government. Freedom, on the other hand, has shifted places; it resides no longer in the public realm but rather in the private life of the citizens and so must be defended against the public and its power. Freedom and power have parted company, and the fateful equating of power with violence, of the political with government, and of government with a necessary evil—a "reflection upon human nature" in Madison's telling phrase—has begun.

THIS, of course, is another way of saying that the social question interfered with the course of the American Revolution no less sharply, though far less dramatically, than it did with the course of the French Revolution. Yet the difference is still profound. Since America was never overwhelmed by poverty, it was "the fatal passion for sudden riches" rather than necessity that stood in the way of the founders of the republic. And this particular pursuit of happiness which, in the words of Judge Pendleton, has always tended "to extinguish every sentiment of political and moral duty," could be held in abeyance at least long enough to dig the foundations and to erect the new building —though not long enough to change the minds of those who were to inhabit it. The result, in contradistinction to the European development, has been that the revolutionary notion of *public* happiness and *political* freedom has never altogether vanished from the American scene; rather, it has become part and parcel of the very structure of the political body of the republic. Whether this structure has a granite groundwork capable of withstanding the futile antics of a society bound to affluence and consumption, or whether it will yield under the pressure of wealth as the European communities have yielded under the pressure of wretchedness and misfortune, only the future can tell.

The point is that America has always been, for better or worse, an enterprise of European mankind. Not only the American Revolution but everything that happened before and after it "was an event within an Atlantic civilization as a whole," as R. R. Palmer recently put it in his *The Age of the Democratic Revolution*. Thus, just as the fact that poverty was conquered in America had the deepest repercussions in Europe, so did the fact that misery remained for much longer the condition of Europe's lower classes have a profound impact upon the course of events in America after the revolution. The foundation of freedom had been preceded by liberation from poverty, for America's early, prerevolutionary prosperity was, at least partly, the result of a deliberate and concentrated effort toward liberation from poverty such as had never been made in the countries of the Old World. This effort in itself, this early determination to conquer the seemingly sempiternal misery of mankind, is certainly one of the greatest achievements of Western history and of the history of mankind. The trouble was that the struggle to abolish poverty, under the impact of a continual mass immigration that yearly washed hundreds of thousands, and even millions, of Europe's poor-

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est classes onto American shores, fell more and more under the sway of the poor themselves, and hence under the guidance of the ideals born out of poverty rather than those principles which had inspired the foundation of freedom.

For abundance and endless consumption are the ideals of the poor, the mirage in the desert of misery. In this sense, affluence and wretchedness are only two sides of the same coin; the bonds of necessity need not be of iron, they can be made of silk. Freedom and luxury have always been considered incompatible, and the modern estimate that tends to blame the insistence of the founding fathers on frugality and, in Jefferson's phrase, "simplicity of manners," upon a Puritan contempt for the delights of the world suggests more an inability to understand freedom than a freedom from prejudice. For that "fatal passion for sudden riches" was never the vice of the sensuous but the dream of the poor; and this vice has been so prevalent in America, almost from the beginning of its colonization, because the country was, even in the 18th century, not only the "land of liberty, the seat of virtue, the asylum of the oppressed," but also the promised land of those whose conditions hardly had prepared them for comprehending either liberty or virtue. It is Europe's poverty as well that has taken its revenge in the ravages with which American prosperity and American mass society increasingly threaten the whole political realm. The hidden wish of poor men is not "To each according to his needs," but "To each according to his desires." And while it is true that freedom can come only to those whose needs have been fulfilled, it is equally true that it will escape those who are bent solely upon living for their desires. The American dream, as the 19th and 20th centuries under the impact of mass immigration came to understand it, was neither the dream of the American Revolution (the foundation of freedom) nor the dream of the French Revolution (the liberation of man); it was, unhappily, the dream of a "promised land" where milk and honey flow. And the fact that the development of modern technology was so soon able to realize this dream beyond anyone's wildest expectation quite naturally had the effect of confirming for the dreamers that they really had come to live in the best of all possible worlds.

One can hardly deny that Crèvecoeur was right when he predicted that "the man will get the better of the citizen, [that] his political maxims will vanish"; that those who in all earnestness say: "The happiness of my family is the only object of my wishes," will be applauded by nearly everybody when, in the name of democracy, they vent their rage against the "great personages who are so far elevated above the common rank of man" that their aspirations transcend their private happiness, or when, in the name of the "common man" and some confused notion of liberalism, they denounce public virtue (which certainly is not the virtue of the husbandman) as mere ambition, and those to whom they owe their freedom as "aristocrats" who (as in the case of John Adams) they believe were possessed by a "colossal vanity" (Vernon L. Parrington). The conversion of the citizen of the revolutions into the private individual of 19th-century society has often been described, usually in terms of the French Revolution which spoke of *citoyens* and *bourgeois*. On a more sophisticated level, we may consider this disappearance of the "taste for political freedom" as the withdrawal of the individual into an "inward domain of consciousness" where he finds the only "appropriate region of human liberty"; from this region, as though from a crumbling fortress, the individual, having gotten the better of the citizen, will then defend himself against a society which in its turn gets "the better of individuality" (John Stuart Mill). This process, more than the revolutions, determined the physiognomy of the 19th century as it partly does even that of the 20th.

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HUGH NISSENSON

The Law

A Story

ON AND OFF, that whole summer, I wondered what my uncle Willi was going to do about his son. The boy, Danny, was going to be thirteen on the twelfth of July, and as early as February, I remember, Willi was talking about having his Bar Mitzvah at their temple in Queens; the whole works—a service in the morning and a party for the family and their friends in the afternoon at their home.

"Nothing ostentatious, you understand," he told me. "Drinks and hors d'oeuvres. You know; franks, little pigs in a blanket, or lox on pieces of toast."

I said that I thought that the party was a nice idea, but though it was really none of my business, maybe that was enough.

"I mean why the whole service? You don't want to make him go through all of that speechmaking."

"Ah but he insists," said Willi.

"Does he?"

"So help me. He says he wouldn't think of having one without the other, and his doctor says it's all right. The doctor says if he really wants to speak, then by all means. Treat him normal."

"What doctor?"

"Rhinehart. Didn't I tell you? Rhinehart's been treating him since the fall."

"Who's Rhinehart?"

"I thought you knew. Didn't Helene tell you? Speech therapy. One of the big speech men in New York. He's connected with the medical center. Just since September, and he's done wonders."

"I didn't know. I'm glad to hear it."

"Will you come to the service?" he asked.

"When will it be?"

"The weekend after the Fourth. That Saturday, in the morning. The Fourth is on a Monday. That Saturday, the ninth," he said.

"Sure."

"Ten o'clock in the morning. Don't you forget now. Mark it down," he said.

I never thought he'd go through with it. For as long as I could remember, his son had a terrible stammer. Just to say "hello" was an effort. He had a habit of closing his eyes as though he'd been told to visualize the word beforehand. It was agonizing to watch; the shut eyes, a deep breath, the pulse beating in his neck, the chin jerking spasmodically, and the spit gathering in the corners of his mouth.

"H-h-h-hello, Joe," he'd greet me. "How-how-how are ya?"

Relaxed, silent, he seemed another kid, somehow altogether different looking, resembling his mother, with a placid oval face, and large dark eyes, beautiful eyes, with long curly lashes, and delicate hands with bitten nails that were always in his mouth. To avoid speaking as much as possible, he had developed the facility of listening attentively, fixing those eyes

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on you, with a faint smile on his lips, nodding or shaking his head as the occasion demanded, so that he gave the impression of following whatever you said with a kind of ravenous intensity that made you self-conscious of being able to speak normally yourself. An intelligent defense. That he really was brilliant, there wasn't any doubt.

"An 'A' average in school," Willi told me, throwing his arm about the boy's shoulders. "He loves history," he added, as a kind of concession to me. A pause, as though I was supposed to test the boy's knowledge. Helene, his mother, glanced at me with alarm. I remained silent, smiling with a nod, and it seemed to me that the boy himself gave me a look of gratitude that went unnoticed by his father. At the time I was teaching American history to the tenth grade in a private school on the Upper East Side. It was easy to imagine Danny's suffering in class, called upon by his teacher to recite, straining to express himself, while the other kids laughed behind their hands, or mimicked him, spraying in the air with spit.

ANYHOW, that was in February, as I've said. Came the summer and I didn't see much of them at first. I spent most of my time in the Forty-second Street Library doing research for my Ph.D. thesis on the Alien and Sedition Acts. A couple of times in May Willi called me on the phone to invite me out to dinner, but I was too busy. He was really the only family I had left, but with one thing and another, we were never really close. My mother's younger brother, a man in his middle forties, short and powerfully built, running now to fat, with a snub nose, red cheeks, and a fringe of dark hair about the crown of his head that resembled a monk's tonsure, he always reminded me of the picture of the jolly abbot on the labels of imported German beer. He had been born in Germany, as a matter of fact. My mother had written and tried to persuade him to leave the country in 1935, but he intended to study law at Heidelberg, so the Nazis caught him and deported him to Bergen-Belsen where he managed to survive the war, coming to this country in 1947, just before my mother's death. He had written a book about his experiences—*Mein Erlebnis*—that was never actually published, but everyone who knew him felt they had read it anyhow, from the way he constantly spoke of what had happened to him. When he spoke about the concentration camps, he sounded as if he was quoting by heart from a manuscript. He generally loved to talk, and if it was a blow to his pride that his son had so much trouble in getting a word out straight, he never let on, as far as I could see.

"Stammering? What's a stammer?" I once heard him tell the boy. "It's a sign of greatness. . . . Yes, I mean it. Demosthenes stammered, and Moses. *Moshe Rabenu*. Moses our Teacher himself."

"M-m-moses?"

"The luckiest thing that ever happened, believe you me."

"H-h-how l-lucky?"

"How many Commandments are there?"

His son held up his ten fingers.

"Ten! There you are!" said his father. "Believe me, if he didn't have a stammer he would have given us a hundred. Luck, eh? Luck or not?"

The boy laughed. His father had a way with words, there was no doubt of it, making a good living as a paper box salesman for a company at New Hyde Park on the Island. I imagine he cleared over twenty thousand a year. He lived nicely enough, in one of those red-bricked, two-story, semi-detached houses on 81st Avenue in Queens, with a little rose garden in the back and a pine-paneled bar and rumpus room in the cellar where he intended to have the party after the Bar Mitzvah. I finally went out for dinner the second week in May. We had a drink downstairs.

"You can't help it," he said. "I figure about thirty, thirty-five people. What can

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I do? Helene's family, friends from the office, the kid's friends from school, the rabbi and his wife. Thirty-five, maybe more. Helene says with that many we'll have to serve lunch. I thought maybe a cold buffet. We'll eat down here. I'm having it air conditioned."

"It's a nice idea."

"It'll be a nice party, you wait and see. How about another scotch?"

"Just a drop."

"Chivas Regal. Twenty years old. Like velvet water."

"Just a splash of water," I told him. "Where's Danny?"

"What's the time?"

"Just six."

"Be home any minute. He's at Hebrew school."

"How's he doing?"

"Wonderful. That rabbi does wonders. The boy can already read. Of course, it's all modern. To help him he has a recording of the *Haftorah* he has to say, put out by some company in New Jersey."

"Sounds like a wonderful idea."

"He's reciting from Numbers."

"I don't know too much about it."

"It's some of the Laws, and how they should organize themselves in the march through the desert."

"And Danny likes it?" I asked.

"You should hear him. The rabbi, the doctor, Rhinehart—I told you; everybody helps. Ask him yourself."

He came home about six-thirty, with his notebook under his arm. He had grown a little since I last saw him, become a little leaner, with bigger hands and feet, bony wrists. There was a slight down on his cheeks and upper lip that showed up in the white fluorescent lights over the bar, but so far as I could tell his speech was about the same. He went through the convulsions just to say hello —the suspended breath and shut eyes, the blue veins swelling on the sides of his neck. When we sat down at the dinner table, he remained standing by his place, with a loaf of bread covered by a linen napkin set before him, and a black silk skullcap on the back of his head.

"B-b-b-b-aruch atah a-adonoi," he mumbled the Hebrew blessing of the bread, and when he finished, he looked pale and wiped the spit from his lips with the back of his hand.

"How was that?" Willi asked me.

"Nice."

"Practice. Practice makes perfect."

His son lowered his quivering eyelids. Helene served roast chicken and wild rice, with little brown potatoes.

"You never learned the language?" Willi spoke to me again.

"I was never Bar Mitzvahed, no."

"Either was I."

"Really?"

"In Germany, when I was growing up, it was . . . unfashionable to be given a Jewish education." He tore at a chicken wing with his teeth. "Once in a while in the camp I would run into somebody who could speak Hebrew. It's really an ugly language. . . . It's just that . . . I don't know. It was nice to hear it spoken. It was *verboten,* of course, but still . . . how can I explain? It was something out of our past, the really distant past. . . . It somehow seemed to me to be the only part of our consciousness that was left . . . uncontaminated. Not like Yiddish. I always hated Yiddish. I used to pride myself on my command of German, the way I wrote particularly, a really educated style, but I learned to hate it. Sometime for weeks, I couldn't bring myself to say a word. The language of the SS. . . ."

"T-t-t-tell about H-h-heinz," interrupted his son.

"Eat your chicken," his mother said. The tone of her voice made me look at her with surprise; black hair with a faint reddish tinge, and long curling eyelashes that shadowed her prominent cheekbones. She too was a refugee, coming from Germany in 1936. Lucky enough to have been spared the later horrors. I suddenly sensed that she disapproved, and was even a

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little frightened of Willi's imposition of the whole thing on the boy's consciousness. In front of me, though, "eat your chicken" was all that she said. We finished the rest of the meal in silence—lemon meringue pie and coffee—and Willi, the boy, and I went into the living room and sat down on the sofa.

"Cigar?" Willi asked.

"No thanks."

He belched and lit up, and began to pick his front teeth with the folded cellophane. "How about a little brandy?"

"That'd be nice."

"Napoleon; the best," he said, pouring some into two snifters that the boy had brought in from the kitchen. "Wonderful . . . too good. I'm getting too fat, I know. Soft," he said, patting his paunch. "The doctor tells me I ought to lose at least twenty pounds. An irony, eh? Did you know that when I got out of Belsen I weighed only ninety pounds? Ninety, mind you, and now, like all the other Americans, I'm to die of overweight."

His eyes gleamed as though he derived some sort of satisfaction out of the thought.

"A living skeleton," he went on. "You must have seen photos after the liberation of a place like that. I don't have to tell you."

But he did, as I knew he would; he went on and on, while his son listened, his legs tucked under him, biting on one fingernail after the other.

"You can't know . . . thank God . . . not you, or Danny here, or Helene. No one who was not there can even guess what it was like to be so hungry, to be literally starving to death on two slices of bread a day, and a pint of watery soup with a snip of turnip in it, if you're lucky. Twice a week a spoonful of rancid butter, and an ounce of sausage or cheese . . . and the worst of it knowing that it's endless . . . knowing that no matter how hungry you are today there's absolutely no possibility of getting anything more to eat tomorrow but that the anguish will simply grow and grow and grow . . . words. . . ." He shrugged. "You aren't really listening and I can't blame you. What good are words to describe such things?"

He sucked on his cigar and screwed up his eyes to watch the smoke, as thick and white as milk, gather in the cone of light above the lamp on the coffee table. "There were two obsessions that everyone had. Ask anyone who was in such a place. Have you ever read any books about them? Food first; dreaming about food, sitting down to a meal like we just had, and eating till you burst, and second, just staying alive so that you would be able to describe what was happening to you. Everyone wanted to write a book. Seriously. Just to tell the world, as though to convince ourselves as well that such things were really happening, that we were actually living through them. I wrote *Mein Erlebnis* in six weeks. . . ."

He waved the smoke away, and again his narrowed eyes had that peculiar gleam. The boy sat perfectly motionless, with his lips slightly parted, in expectation of his father's continuing, and for the first time I began to understand the nature of Willi's compulsion to talk so much about what he had endured. Triumph. There was a flash of triumph in his eyes as he regarded his son. It was as if I were listening to a mountain climber—what's his name? the one who climbed Everest—or the first man who will land on the moon and live to tell about it. He talked and talked, partly, I am sure, because it was essentially a personal victory that he was describing—and gloating over, in spite of himself. It was a display of prowess before his son; the supreme success, perhaps even the high point of his life, that he among all those millions managed to live through it all.

From the kitchen came the swish of water and the hum of the automatic dishwasher. Helene came into the living room with a bowl of fruit.

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"An apple, Joe?"

"No thanks."

Willi peeled a banana, and to be polite perhaps, or maybe because of his wife's feelings about talking as he did in front of the boy, he began to ask me about my work.

"The Alien and Sedition Act, eh?" he said. "Yes. . . . Yes, interesting and significant. When was it again?"

"S-s-seventeen n-ninety eight," said Danny.

Willi questioned me with a raised eyebrow. "That's right," I told him. He grinned. "I told you he loves his history."

"He's right, a hundred per cent."

"Who was it?" Willi went on. "President Adams, wasn't it? Against the Bill of Rights . . . the first suspension of habeas corpus."

"And M-m-marshall," began the boy.

His father laughed with his mouth full of banana. "You can see for yourself he knows much more about it than me." The boy smiled, flushed to his temples with pride. "Still, I remember . . . no freedom of speech . . . hundreds of editors thrown into jail for criticizing the government . . . the prisons packed with dissenters." From his voice, he sounded as though he enjoyed it.

"About twenty-five, all told," I said.

"You don't say. Just twenty-five?"

"That's it."

He grinned again. "How about that! America, you see?" he said to his wife. "Imagine. A whole stink over that."

"There was more to it than that," I told him.

"Of course, but still . . . a crisis, genuine indignation over the fate of just twenty-five men. . . ."

"Yes, partly," I told him, suddenly weary.

"And the Jews?" he asked me.

"I don't understand."

"There was no particular repression of the Jews, as such?"

"I never thought about it, to tell you the truth."

He laughed. "Seriously," I went on, "the law was directed against foreigners, mostly . . . the British and the French. French spies, for example. There was a lot of spying going on, and the law forced a lot of foreigners to leave the country."

"But nothing was specifically directed against the Jews."

"No. Why should there have been?"

Another laugh. "What's so funny?" I asked him.

"Don't you know the joke?"

"Which one?"

"You must have heard it. The SS man in Berlin who grabs a Jew by the collar and kicks him in the shins. 'Tell me, Jew, who's responsible for all of Germany's troubles?' The Jew trembles. His teeth absolutely chatter; his knees knock together. 'The Jews, of course,' he answers. 'Good,' says the SS man. 'The Jews and the bareback riders in the circus,' the little Jew goes on. 'Why the bareback riders in the circus?' the SS man asks. 'Aha,' comes the answer. 'Exactly! So *nu*, why the Jews?' "

THE boy laughed, slapping his thigh, guffawing until the tears came into his eyes, as if he were delighted to find a release in a sound that he could express without impediment.

"Yes, yes," Willi continued, taking a last bite of the banana and throwing the peel into an ashtray. "He laughs, and it's true, the absurdity, and yet there's something more. There's a reason. Why the Jews? There's the psychology of a Heinz to contend with, and not an isolated pathological case either, but common. More common than you'd care to know."

The boy shifted his position, leaning toward his father with one hand on the arm of the sofa, and both feet on the floor.

"Have a piece of fruit," Helene told me.

"No thanks. Who's Heinz?" I asked.

"*Herr Haupsturmfuehrer* Berger," said Willi. "You know the type. Tall and blond, beautiful, really, the image of

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manly perfection that you can see for yourself, today, just by going to the movies. A movie star, so help me; six foot two at least, with straight blond hair, white flashing teeth, a positively captivating smile, dimples at the corners of his mouth, beautiful blue eyes. . . . The uniform? Perfection. Designed for him; tailor-made for that slim, hard body, broad shoulders. . . ." He spread his stubby hands in the air, reminding me more than ever of that abbot making an invocation. "Black, all black and belted with what do you call them?—riding pants . . . jodhpurs—and gleaming black boots."

"BUT I still don't understand," I said. "Who is he?"

"*Was,*" corrected Willi. "He was a guard in the camp. After the war the British caught him and he was tried and hanged. . . .Was. . . . Unfortunate. I mean it too. Seriously. No one had the good sense to study him instead . . . how he used to stand, for example. Very significant . . . with the thumb of one hand, his left hand, I remember, stuck in his belt, and the other grasping a braided riding whip that he would tap against those boots. The boots, the belt, the buckle, the buttons, all flashing in the sun; enough to blind you, believe me . . . white teeth . . . that dimpled smile. . . . He was convicted of murder. One day he killed a child, a little girl of seven. . . . In the camp, some of the barracks had three tiers of wooden beds along the wall, bare planks to sleep on, *boxen* in the jargon. We slept together packed like sardines. Often someone would die in the night, but it was impossible to move. We would sleep with the dead, but no matter . . . where was I?"

"The child," I said.

"Ah yes. One of the *boxen* in the women's barracks was coming apart; one leg was coming off. Three tiers, mind you; hundreds of pounds of timber. . . . For some reason the child was on the floor, directly beneath it, on her hands and knees. Perhaps he—Heinz—had ordered it so. I don't know. I don't think so. She must just have been looking for something. A crust of bread, a crumb, perhaps, and in walks the *Hauptsturmfuehrer* smiling all the while as though to charm the ladies, immediately sizing up the situation; perfect. The child beneath the rickety bed, the girl's mother, Frau Schwarz, in one corner, binding up her swollen legs with a few rags.

" '*Gnädige Frau. . . .*'

"He greets her—the mother, who stands up nervously twisting a rag about her wrist.

" 'Hilda!' she screams. . . . Not even a Jewish name, mind you; a good German name. . . . 'Hilda!' The child begins to rise, but it's too late. With a flick of his boot, a movement of that polished toe, our Heinz has already acted, kicking out the loose timber, bringing down the whole thing on the child's back . . . a broken back.

" 'Mama,' she cries, 'I can't move. My legs.' For a day and a half like that until she goes into convulsions and dies in her mother's arms. The woman comes to me and reproaches herself because she hasn't got the courage to commit suicide.

" 'After all,' she says, 'I have the means.' She's referring to the rags that she has woven into a noose. 'Just the courage is lacking. Mr. Levy, what's the matter with me?' She goes mad and before she dies she wanders about the camp asking everyone to strangle her . . . she even comes to Heinz. . . . It was just outside the latrines. I witnessed this myself. Apparently he doesn't even remember who she is. He shoos her away, those beautiful blue eyes clouded for just an instant in complete bewilderment.

" '*Verrückt,*' he tells me. 'Insane.' With a shrug. I'm busy on my hands and knees scrubbing the concrete floor with a brush and a pail of lye and water, not daring to look up, blinded by those boots.

" 'Here, here, Levy. No; to the left. Put some elbow grease into it.'

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"A FANATIC for order and cleanliness, you know. He used to speak with me a great deal. I couldn't imagine why. Perhaps because we were both about the same age. He would constantly ask me questions about the Jews—technical questions, so to speak, about our beliefs, about the Torah, for example, all the Laws. He seemed sincerely interested, and as far as I could tell, he was genuinely disappointed when he realized that I knew next to nothing and had been educated like himself as a good, middle-class German . . . *Gymnasium,* and two semesters at Heidelberg. One day he was absolutely flabbergasted to find out that for the life of me I couldn't even recite the Ten Commandments. I couldn't get more than five, and not in order, either. 'Tsk! Tsk! Levy.' He shook that beautiful head and began reciting them all.

" 'I am the Lord thy God who brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. . . . Thou shalt have no other Gods before me,' etc., etc. All of them, the whole business. . . . Imagine the scene. It was a Sunday, I remember, rest day, the one day off from man-killing labor the whole week. I had gone outside the barracks to get a little sun. Imagine it, I tell you. A vast desert, our own Sinai surrounding us, rolling sand dunes, green wooden shacks set in rows. In the distance, the silver birch trees of the women's camp like a mirage. The wire mesh gate of the main entrance to my right that always reminded me of the entrance to a zoo. Here and there, scattered on the ground, all heaped together, the mounds of bodies, the living dead and the dead—stiff, open eyes, gaping mouths, all heaped together, indistinguishable. . . . It was early spring, and warm, with a weak sun, gray clouds, cumuli, with a flat base and rounded outlines, piled up like mountains, in the western sky. . . . I remember that distinctly . . . cumuli. . . . It was a matter of life and death, learning to tell one type of cloud from another—the promise of a little rain. There was never enough water. Just two concrete basins to supply the entire camp. We were slowly dying of thirst in addition to everything else. I remember thinking that if the rain does come I shall try and remain outside the barracks as long as I can after roll call, with my mouth open. Crazy thoughts. What was it? Chickens, young *Truthaehne* . . . turkeys drown that way in the rain, too stupid to close their mouths. . . . Insane, disconnected thoughts, while according to regulation, I stood rigidly at attention, with my chin in, and chest out, my thumbs along the crease in my striped prison pants, as Heinz drones on and on.

" 'Honor thy father and thy mother. . . . Thou shalt not murder. . . .' On and on to the end, and then, with what I can only describe as a shy expression on his face, the explanation:

" 'We live in Saxony,' he tells me. 'Absolutely charming, Levy. Do you know East Prussia? Ah, the orchard and the flower beds . . . roses, red and white roses, growing in front of the church. My father's church. A pastor, Levy, and his father before him and before that. Three generations of pastors. When I was young, I thought I would go into the church myself. I have the religious temperament.'

" 'Yer sir. *Jawohl, Herr Hauptsturmfuehrer.*'

" 'Does that astonish you?'

" 'Not at all, *Mein Herr.*'

" 'It does, of course . . . Sundays. . . . Ah, a day like today. The church bells echoing in the valley and the peasants in their black suits and creaking shoes shuffling between those rose beds to listen to papa thunder at them from the pulpit, slamming down his fist. 'Love, my friends! It is written that we are to love our neighbors as ourselves.' The fist again. 'Love,' he shouts, and I would begin to tremble, literally begin to shake. . . . Why, Levy? I often asked myself. You ought to know. Jews are great psychologists. Freud. . . .'

" 'I don't know, *Herr Hauptsturmfuehrer.*'

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" 'A pity. . . . He would preach love and all I could see from that front pew was that great fist—the blond hair on the backs of the fingers, the knuckles clenched, white. . . . That huge fist protruding from the black cuff like the hand of God from a thunder cloud. . . .' ["That was his image, I swear it," said Willi. "So help me, a literary mind—*'die grosse Faust ist aus der schwartzen Manschette heraus gestreckt wie Gottes Hand aus einer Sturmwolke.'* "] 'Yet, to be honest,' Heinz went on, 'he never struck me. Not once in my whole life, and I was never what you could call a good child, Levy. Secret vices . . . a rebellious spirit that had to be broken . . . and obedience was doubly difficult for the likes of me, but as I've said, whenever I misbehaved, he never once laid a hand on me. . . . Love. . . . He spoke about love and was silent. Talk about psychology! That silence for days on end; all he had to do was say nothing and I would lie in my bed at night, trembling. Can you explain that, Levy? I would lie awake praying that he would beat me instead, smash me with that fist, flay my back with his belt rather than that love, that silent displeasure. He had thin, pale lips, with a network of wrinkles at the corner of his mouth. . . . No dimples. I get my dimples from my mother. . . . To please him, I would learn whole passages of the Bible by heart; your Bible, Levy.'

"He tapped his whip against the top of his boots.

" 'Tell me, Levy. . . .'

" 'Yes sir?'

" 'I know the Jews; a gentle people. Tell me honestly. Did your father beat you?'

" 'No sir.'

" 'Not once?'

" 'Never, sir.'

" 'A gentle people, as I've said, but lax in your education, wouldn't you say?'

" 'Yes, sir.'

"'Well, then we must remedy that....'"

For the first time, the flow of words faltered. He paused to relight his cigar, and then as though it had left a bad taste in his mouth, snubbed it out in the ashtray and picked a fleck of tobacco from the tip of his tongue. "Like some dog," he finally went on. "As if he were training some animal. . . . That whip across the back, the bridge of the nose, the eyes. . . . All afternoon I stood at attention while those clouds gathered and it began to rain, until I could repeat it all word for word. 'I am the Lord thy God who brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt.' He hit me in the Adam's apple. I could hardly speak. The rain ran down my face. . . ."

ANOTHER silence. The automatic dishwasher had long since stopped. Helene bit into an apple and looked at her watch. Before she had a chance to speak, the boy shook his head.

"Never mind," she told him. "It's late. Past ten. Time for bed."

"Ten?" I repeated, standing up. "I've got to go myself."

"Say good night to Joe," said Helene to her son.

"You w-w-wanna hear my r-r-record?" he asked me. "It'll only t-t-take a minute."

"Okay; for a minute."

His room was at the head of the stairs. I followed him up and he shut the door.

"Y-you never heard about H-h-heinz before?"

"Never."

"I have, o-often. It used to give me b-bad dreams."

On top of his desk was a phonograph record in a brown paper jacket. He put it on the portable phonograph that stood in one corner of the room on cast-iron legs. For a time, sitting on the bed while the boy put on his pajamas, I listened to the deep voice chanting in the unintelligible tongue.

"D-don't you understand?"

"Not much," I said.

"How—how come you were never B-b-barmitzvahed?"

"I wasn't as lucky as you. My father

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was dead, and my mother didn't care one way or the other."

"M-mama doesn't care either," he said, tying his bathrobe around his waist. He rejected the record and stood by the window that faced the rose garden, biting his thumbnails.

"D-d-do you believe in G-g-god?"

"I don't know."

"I do-do."

"You're lucky there too."

"D-don't you ever pray?"

"No."

"I d-d-do; often."

I imagined that rather like his laughter, that too must have been a wonderful relief; praying in silence, grateful and convinced that he was able to communicate something without a stammer.

"D-d-do you know what I p-pray for?" he asked me.

"What?"

"A-actually it's a s-s-secret."

"You can tell me if you like."

"S-sometimes, y-you know, when I think of all th-those people at the Temple —at the B-b-barmitzvah, I mean, I get into a sweat."

"It'll be all right."

"They'll be h-hundreds of people there, m-mama's whole family, G-g-goldman's parents, and all his family, and all their f-f-friends."

"Who's Goldman?"

"He's a f-f-fink. Sammy Goldman. We're being B-b-barmitzvahed together. He's rich. His father owns a chain of delicatessens. He's t-told everybody about me. He didn't want to g-go with me. He has p-pimples from p-p-playing with himself."

"It's late," I told him. "I really ought to go."

"It's another m-m-month or so. More. Time enough. Anything can h-h-happen in time, don't you think?"

"It depends."

"If you b-b-believe enough?"

"Maybe so."

"The st-st-stammer, you know, is all psychological. Doctor Rhinehart says so. It c-came all of a sudden. W-when I started school."

"I didn't know."

"Oh yes. And if it c-c-came that way, it can g-g-go too; suddenly, I mean. That's l-l-logical, don't you think?"

"Anything is possible," I told him.

He smiled abruptly, and opened his mouth again, giving me the impression that he wanted to say something more. But for some reason, maybe because he was tired, he got stuck; his chin jerked spasmodically, as he tried to force the word from his mouth, and then he shrugged and gave up, holding out a moist palm to say good night and goodbye.

"Good luck," I told him.

ABOUT a week later his father gave me a ring. He had a customer in the garment district, on Seventh Avenue and Thirty-seventh Street, and he thought that if as usual I was working at the Forty-second Street Library, we could meet for a bite of lunch. I said fine. It was a hot day. His cheeks were purplish from the heat, and he breathed heavily. We had a sandwich and a soda at Schrafft's, and then he walked me back to the Library where we sat for a while on the granite steps under the trees around the flagpole at the north entrance on the Avenue. The place was jammed with shopgirls and clerks taking in a few minutes of the sun before they had to go back to work. We sat and watched the flow of crowds going into the stores; the cars and the buses and the cabs, the cop at the intersection, wearing dark glasses and a short-sleeved summer uniform, waving the traffic on.

"How's the work?" Willi asked me.

"Coming along. How's the family?"

"Fine. They send their best."

"Send my love."

"I will." He smoked a cigar and coughed. The air was thick with fumes. "You know, Danny doesn't say much, but he can't fool me."

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"About what?"

"He's worried about the Bar Mitzvah. Speaking in front of all those people. I told him to take it slow and everything would be all right. What do you think?"

"You know best."

"Helene thinks I'm doing the wrong thing."

"It's hard for me to say."

"You heard me that night. . . . Sometimes I go on and on. She says I shouldn't fill his head with that sort of thing, but I say that he has a right to know."

"You may be right."

"He doesn't understand everything, of course. . . . That story about Heinz, for example. But he will in time. . . . It was a revelation to me. You know, sometimes, in the camp, before I met Heinz, I used to wonder why it was all happening. . . why the Jews, I mean. . . .

"Oh, there are other factors, of course . . . but don't you see? The Commandments. All the Laws. . . ." He flicked away his cigar ash.

"Sure."

"The Law, more than anything. . . . He taught me that. . . . That day in the rain. They were murdering, humiliating us because whether it was true or not we had come to—how shall I say it? Embody, I suppose. . . . In some strange way, we had come to embody that very Law that bound them too . . . through Christianity, I mean, and in destroying us. . . . Heinz, for example, hating his father, the pastor, who preached love . . . love thy neighbor, from Leviticus, you know. . . . Of course, there's the fist; love and hate all mixed together. I really don't understand that part myself, but I do know that what all of them hated, somehow, was the yoke that we had given them so long ago. The Law that makes all the difference, that makes a man different from a beast, the civilized. . . ." He coughed. "Can't you see what I mean?"

"I'm not sure. I think so."

"It's hard for me to keep it all straight myself. . . . I just feel that the least we can do is pass it on, the way we always have, from father to son. The Bar Mitzvah. . . . Of course, now with Danny, he doesn't really complain, but he suffers, I know. I'm not sure just what to do."

"What can I tell you?"

"Nothing, I know. I just wanted you to understand. . . . You know the irony is that he hates me."

"Who?"

"Danny."

"Don't be absurd."

"It's true . . . at least partly. Oh, he loves me too, but Rhinehart says that stammering is very often . . . it's very complicated . . . a kind of expression of hostility, resentment, to those whom you're supposed to love. It all started, you know, when he began school. He was very bright. I've always demanded too damn much of him."

"It'll be okay."

"Oh, I know it . . . eventually. It's only that in the meantime. . . . I told him yesterday that if he wanted to call the whole service off, I'd be glad to do it in a minute."

"What'd he say?"

"Nothing doing. What he's been saying all along. Definitely not. As a matter of fact, he smiled."

"Did he?" I said. "What are you going to do?"

"Go ahead, I guess. But I made it as clear as I could that any time he wants to drop the speech and just have the party at home, it was more than okay by me."

"Well," I told him, "I've got to get back to the books."

"I know. I didn't mean to keep you."

"Thanks for lunch."

"My pleasure. . . . Joe, you're the only blood relative I've got left. People talk. I just wanted you to understand."

I nodded, and left him standing there, smoking and coughing, in the dazzling pattern of light and shadow cast by the sunlight streaming through the dusty leaves of the trees.

The weeks went by. Once or twice he

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called again to have me out to dinner, and I asked him whether or not the service was still on. "Sure," he'd answer. "He's studying away." I was too busy getting my notes into shape to go out and see them. My work was going fairly well. I decided to attack the whole problem from the point of view of Chief Justice Marshall—the origin of judicial review, but with all of it, I got a good chunk of the reading done by the beginning of July, so that over the Fourth I was able to get away and spend the weekend visiting a classmate of mine at Columbia and his wife who had taken a cottage for the summer at Cape Cod. I got back Tuesday night. The service was scheduled for the following Saturday, so I called Willi to make absolutely sure once and for all that Danny was going to speak in the Temple.

"You bet," he told me. "You know, I think I've got a budding rabbi on my hands."

"How do you mean?"

"Religious? My God, you ought to see him. He gets up at six in the morning to pray."

THE service was to be held at Temple Shalom on 78th Avenue. I hadn't bought a present yet and I was stumped. For the life of me I couldn't think of anything original. In the end, I went to the bank and bought him a series E savings bond for $25.00. Somehow it didn't seem enough, so in addition, I bought him fourteen silver dollars—one extra for good luck—and had them packed in a velvet box with a clasp. I thought the kid might get a kick out of it.

Saturday at last; hot and muggy, a promise of rain, with a peculiar diffused light shining from behind the low gray clouds. It was too hot to sleep much the night before. I was up at six-thirty and out of the house by a quarter to eight. At first I thought that maybe I'd go out to the house and we'd all go to the Temple together. I don't know why; I decided against it. I loafed around instead, wasting time, and by the time I took the subway and arrived in Queens it was a quarter to ten. The crowds were already arriving at the temple; Goldman's relatives, most of them people I didn't know, all dressed up in dark summer suits and light dresses, flowered prints and silks. It was so muggy that the powder flaked on the women's cheeks. I finally recognized Helene's brother and sister-in-law in the crush—a chiropodist who lived in Brooklyn. We chatted for a minute before they went inside.

"Willi here?" I asked.

"Not yet. I didn't see any of them," he said. "Maybe we ought to call up and find out if they're really coming. Between you and me I never thought the kid would go through with it."

I waited alone just outside the big oaken doors. The air was stifling, and the sun had shifted and faded from behind the clouds darkening the streets. It began to rain. I went into the vestibule, and about three minutes of ten, the family arrived.

"A rabbi, I told you," said Willi, folding his dripping umbrella. "He didn't want to take a cab on *shabbos*. We had to walk here in the rain."

Helene took off her wilted straw hat. "Ruined," she said. The boy said nothing. With a white silk prayer shawl over his arm, he was dressed in a dark blue suit that emphasized the pallor of his face. All the color had gone from his cheeks; his lips were drawn and white.

"Congratulations," I told him.

He nodded. "We're late," said his father. "We ought to get seated." He took his wife by the elbow and they went inside. The boy hung back and pulled at my sleeve.

"D-d-d-do you think they'll l-laugh?" he asked.

"Of course not."

He shook his head and shrugged.

"I p-p-p-prayed and p-p-prayed."

We all sat in the front pew, directly to the left of the Ark. There were bas-

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kets of red roses set on the marble steps. The bronze doors of the Ark were open and the rabbi, young and handsome, wearing horn-rimmed glasses and prematurely gray at the temples, conducted the morning service. He was sweating, and while the cantor sang, he surreptitiously plucked a handkerchief from the sleeve of his white robe and dabbed at his upper lip. The service went on, mostly in Hebrew, chanting and responsive reading, the drone of voices and the tinkle of silver bells as Willi and Mr. Goldman were called upon to elevate the Torah over the heads of the congregation and lay it open on the mahogany lectern set on the edge of the steps. The rain beat against the stained-glass windows. Danny sat to my right, picking at the cuticle of his thumb. When it came time for the recitation of the *Haftorah,* the Goldman kid went first. He would do well and he knew it—chanting the Hebrew in a high sing-song voice that was just beginning to crack; rather good-looking, and tall for his age, with reddish blond hair, full lips, and pimpled cheeks. His father, seated on the *bimah* to the rabbi's left and next to Willi, beamed at the audience. Then it was Danny's turn. The crowd shifted perceptibly in their seats, and as he stood up, two women in the row behind us nervously began to fan themselves with their prayer books. Evidently he was right; the Goldman boy had told everyone about his stammer. You could sense it. You could hear everyone in the place take a deep breath as he mounted the three steps with the fringed end of his prayer shawl dragging along the floor. He stood behind the unrolled Torah, and with a bitten forefinger, found his place. The rustle of silks; the audience had shifted again, with a faint murmur. The wooden pews creaked, and the noise must have startled him, because he suddenly glanced up. For a moment he was up to his old tricks, trying to stare them down, but it was no use. No one said anything.

All at once he was just listening to the sound of their labored breathing. They pitied him and he knew it, and they hated him, in spite of themselves, for the embarrassment that he was causing them, and he was aware of that too. The rabbi wiped the sweat from his upper lip. With his left hand rubbing the side of his snub nose, Willi sat looking at his feet. Then, for a moment more, wide-eyed, and with trembling lips, the boy continued to stare down at the crowd until he caught my eye. He blinked and shrugged his shoulders again, and hunched forward, as though, before he began to stammer the blessing, he had made up his mind to assume the burden of what the reiteration of the Law of his Fathers had demanded from the first.

IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES

The Future of the UN	HANS J. MORGENTHAU
Harry Golden and American Culture	THEODORE SOLOTAROFF
The Alienated Israeli	MATI MEGED
Division in the Labor Party	DAVID MARQUAND
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MEDICAL CARE & THE CONSUMER

EDWARD T. CHASE

THE year 1960 may well come to mark the turning point in the American medical profession's social and economic relations with the American public. Several developments which have taken place during this year indicate rather clearly that organized medicine has lost its absolute control over the distribution of medical care—that the power of decision in these matters is beginning to pass into the hands of the general public and those who represent its interests. To be sure, the profession has not exactly suffered a rout: it retains, as it should, unconditional power over the content of medicine—the technology of medical care. Also it continues to have a powerful influence in determining the kind and scope of medical service offered to the public. But the fact remains that in the matter of *how* medical care is to be distributed, the profession is now rapidly losing ground to the consumer public, led largely by organized labor and government.

The most publicized gain this year was the decision by both the Democratic and the Republican parties and their respective presidential candidates to defy the American Medical Association by supporting government medical care for part of the general public—those persons over sixty-five. The debate over the Forand bill has been resolved for the present by Congressional approval of legislation which, though limited in scope, commits the federal government to substantially larger contributions to the states' medical care programs for the aged. The unprecedented bipartisan support of such legislation is significant—the wedge for which labor and other consumer groups, along with sociologists and welfare experts, have been fighting for twenty-odd years.

There are good reasons why both labor and the AMA have all along taken this piece of legislation to be a key test of power. First, federal subsidy must eventually mean federal supervision of standards and hence a degree of official lay power over the doctors' performance; a consequence which is anathema to the profession. Secondly, once the principle of subsidized care for one part of the public has been conceded, the way is opened for a general national health service —the avowed aim of labor and the final catastrophe as the AMA sees it.

However dramatic the successful fight for the principle of old-age medical care has been, there are other quieter, but more fundamental—and ultimately more important—signs of the growing lay power in medicine. A series of critical and authoritative studies have been issued recently on various problems confronting American medicine—from the cost of hospital care to the inadequacy of Blue Cross. On still other fronts, county medical societies have suffered various setbacks in struggles against lay groups, with the result that certain experimental programs are now underway in health care and health insurance which are likely to further the trend toward lay control. I shall discuss each of these developments in turn.

Outstanding among the recent reports is *Prepayment for Hospital Care in New York State,* a two-year examination of

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the largest Blue Cross plan (more than 7 million subscribers) by the Columbia University School of Public Health and Administrative Medicine under the direction of Dr. Ray E. Trussell. The Trussell report—which has long been awaited in the field of medical economics—is much more than a routine survey of a local hospital insurance plan. Though written for specialists in the field, it nevertheless raises a number of salient points fraught with meaning for anyone familiar with the modern history of medical care systems, especially the emergence of the British National Health Service.

Since its origin during the depression as a simple non-profit prepayment "budget" scheme for meeting hospital bills, Blue Cross has grown into the single most important organization for handling the purchase of health care in the United States. This extraordinary quasi-public institution has enrolled over 54 million subscribers and pays about a billion and a half dollars annually to the nation's hospitals. And as the modern hospital has increasingly become the center of scientific medical care, so the policies of Blue Cross have in turn strongly affected the nation's pattern of health services. The central point of the Trussell report is that Blue Cross (and thus to a large degree our hospital system) is nearing a crisis and can survive only by major economic and operational reforms.

THE REPORT recommends more than a score of needed changes. Among these are the following: that the days of hospitalization coverage be increased and date from infancy; that coverage be extended to cover mental illness in general hospitals; that nursing home care and ambulatory diagnostic services be included; that a uniform contract be developed for adoption by all the regional Blue Cross plans; that hospital boards develop a system for reviewing admissions and checking on length of stay; that rates be promulgated on a uniform, community-wide basis rather than on "experience rating," which favors the younger, healthier groups with lower premiums; that only accredited hospitals be contracted with, excluding inferior proprietary hospitals which are now, in effect, guaranteed a profit by Blue Cross; that rates be raised realistically, one of the reasons being to end the scandalous situation whereby underpaid workers are subsidizing the hospital care of the rest of us.

Two other recommendations made by the Trussell report are of even greater significance, for their implementation would radically alter the basic structure of our medical care system. First, there is a detailed plan for broadening membership on the boards of Blue Cross in order to increase representation of lay consumer interests. This proposal stems from the assumption that Blue Cross has become a collection agency for the hospitals, dominated by doctors and oblivious both to cost controls and to deficiencies in the range of medical services covered in the Blue Cross contract. In fact, the report recommends that "not more than one-half of the Boards of Directors should be hospital trustees, *members of the medical profession,* hospital administrators or other professional personnel such as nurses and social workers" (my italics). The balance of the directors would be drawn from industry, labor, and the public at large, including subscribers.

This is a far-reaching proposal. In practice it would bring under lay scrutiny the archaic, piecework approach to medical fees and services cherished by the AMA—the approach known as "solo private practice on a fee-for-service basis." Under this approach, the physician has been able to pattern his services so as to maximize his income without any consideration for the need to control the costly abuses and inefficiencies plaguing Blue Cross. Prominent among the abuses and inefficiencies mentioned in the report are unnecessary hospitalization, and overly long hospital stays; wasteful duplication of expensive equipment and facilities; failure to provide for the development of out-patient diagnostic facilities in order to reduce hospitalization; and failure to develop home-care programs and efficient convalescent facilities. While the physicians have insisted on controlling the medical care system and have intimidated lay health administrators from seizing the initiative, they themselves have failed signally to assume leadership. Active lay control of Blue Cross boards—such as the Trussell report advocates—would exert sufficient pressure upon the contracting hospitals to force the medical profession to reform.

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The Trussell report goes even one step farther than expressing the need for lay membership on Blue Cross boards; it also recommends that a state agency be created to implement such a change. The central state agency, to be called the Hospital Review and Planning Commission, would draw its members from the public, the hospitals, the profession, the different prepayment plans, and from the government. Some members would be appointed by the governor, others by a secondary group of Regional Hospital Review and Planning Councils. Together the Hospital Review and Planning Commission (the last State legislature in New York passed legislation that provides for such a body) and its subordinate Regional Hospital Councils, would in effect create and administer a coherent program for the state's health-facilities systems. For the first time there would be a central agency, authorized by the state to collect and review statistical data, to ensure high operating standards, to advise the various state departments which now have piecemeal responsibilities in the health field, to review rate changes, and to provide advice, according to its master regional plans, on the important matter of hospital construction and expansion.

In the long view, what seems even more significant than the advocacy of government as well as lay supervision of medical expenses is the recognition, implicit in the recommendation for Regional Councils, of the need for a master plan to coordinate local health facilities. I shall return to this point presently, in connection with the Heyman report.

The Trussell report is a staid document; written in the usual impersonal jargon, it levels its heaviest charges indirectly. But the inference to be drawn is clear: that the doctors have not confronted the challenge of spiraling medical costs and moreover have effectively inhibited the hospitals from doing so. A revamped Blue Cross administration, backed up by the new State Commission, can and must take command and become the comprehensive dispenser of health services implicit in its present limited role.

The Trussell report is only one of more than a dozen recently published studies —all of them researched and written under varied auspices by experts in their field, and all of them instancing a common concern over the state of American medicine. The virtually simultaneous appearance of these reports is itself an extraordinary phenomenon and is best explained as a response of our society both to the need for an adequate system of medical services and to the fact that illness is the major remaining cause of personal financial disaster. To estimate the significance of these reports, one must also remember that such examinations of policy in the field of medicine have in the past played a crucial role in shaping the profession, the most noteworthy example being the Flexner report of 1910 on medical education.

Among the new reports of special interest and relevance are *Physicians for a Growing America—Report of the Surgeon General's Consultant Group on Medical Education* (the Bane report); *Federal Support of Medical Research* (the Jones report); and the reports of the New Jersey Blue Cross Rate Study Committee and the New York Mayor's Commission on Health Services (the Heyman report).

Both the Bane and the Jones reports call for vastly increased federal expenditures, the first to increase our supply of doctors and the second to subsidize medical research. Appearing as they have during the Forand bill debate and the decision of the high councils of both political parties to support aid for the aged, the two reports further emphasize the fact that a momentous shift is taking place in the economics of American medicine. For here are two major studies by leading figures in the medical profession which both run counter to some of the traditional arguments of organized medicine: that federal grants are pernicious in principle, that the doctor shortage isn't really critical, and that since we have the best health services system in the world (vital statistics, however, show that we haven't), tax funds for research isn't really a priority matter.

The other two reports mentioned are also extremely pertinent, again partly because of their timing and partly because they run counter to crucial AMA positions. The widely discussed report by the New Jersey Blue Cross Rate Study Committee is the first such study to reject the AMA conten-

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tion that rising costs are simply a result of the "hotel" aspect of hospitals, particularly their rising labor costs, and that the costs really have nothing to do with the doctors themselves. As the report argues:

> This analysis leads one to the inescapable conclusion that the medical influences, as they are exerted by doctors individually, in staff and through their professional bodies, are five times as great a factor in the increase in hospital costs as all the other influences the hospitals have to encounter in their services.

The point here is not that doctors are all overcharging their patients. The medical societies and the AMA frequently point out —and rightly—that most individual doctors' fees haven't really gone up very much. What this study contends (and what organized medicine scrupulously avoids discussing) is that the uncontrolled activities of the doctors—such practices as ordering diagnostic admissions to hospitals under the guise of therapy, countenancing extended hospital stays, indulging patients' demands for miracle drugs, and performing unnecessary surgery—have led directly to the alarming inflation of medical costs:

> If a way is to be found to check the rise in hospital costs, the most fruitful line of inquiry would appear to be in the field of medical costs. This seems to be an endeavor which is not within the power of the hospitals, but rather must be left to the medical profession . . . how successfully the administrator of the hospital can control his costs is to a very large extent dependent upon the demands and requirements of the attending physicians. . . . Should it not therefore be the responsibility of the medical profession to devise some manner of control on the costs of hospital medical care?

The New Jersey Blue Cross report thus echoes the initial theme of the Trussell report, though it neglects to take the next step of advocating specific reforms. And once again the implication is clear that lay intervention has been made necessary by the failure of the doctors to remedy these matters on their own.

Finally, there is the recently published Heyman report on New York City's health facilities, which is already commanding serious attention and powerfully reiterates many of the criticisms made in the other reports. Its principal point of interest for our purposes is that it repeats, quite independently, the recommendation for coordinated regional planning of hospitals and related health facilities contained in the Trussell report and certainly implied in the New Jersey study. Similarly, it proposes that a state planning council be established to coordinate medical facilities for the purpose of avoiding waste and duplication.

The conditions revealed by these reports are remarkably similar to those which in England led directly to the National Health Service. There are the same problems and conflicts; the same mounting pressures for reform by the middle classes; the same movement toward non-medical administrative direction, governmental support, and the esablishment of a rational, coherent system that will *get more out of the medical care dollar.* This is not to say that we are about to adopt the pattern of the English Health Service, and in any case the issue in America is economic, not ideological.* Labor leaders, for example, in pressing for more federal financial assistance in medical care, do not expect a socialist system. What they want is for the government to assume the medical cost burden so that they can concentrate on straight dollars-and-cents wage gains, instead of on fringe benefits which are then lost in the spiraling health insurance rates. Nor is ideology behind the demand for group medical practice in place of the "solo" kind. Group medical practice is generally a more efficient and inexpensive system in an age when advancing medical technology inevitably forces up the costs.

AN INTERESTING case of the actual process by which the AMA has been losing ground in its struggle to prevent any real change in the way medical care is organized happened recently in Albany. Last spring the Albany Blue Cross plan instituted an experimental system of coverage, at no extra premium, for certain diagnostic services like X-rays and basal metabolisms, which would be administered in the out-patient depart-

* It is worth noting, too, that according to Harry Eckstein's superb study *The English Health Service* (Harvard University Press, 1958), the English Health Service itself came into being to remedy inefficiency rather than to institute socialism.

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ments of member hospitals. The plan aroused widespread interest because it was one of the first serious attempts to cope with a major cause of the spiral in Blue Cross rates—hospitalizing subscribers for purely diagnostic purposes, so that their tests are paid for by Blue Cross under the guise of treatment. The Albany County Medical Society, backed by the New York State Medical Society, took issue with the experiment at the behest of the radiologists, who presumably were fearful of losing some of their private practice to the hospitals. Resolutions were prepared to remove from the society those house physicians administering the tests. And the executive director of the American College of Radiology, William C. Stronach, argued that the very survival of the right to a free choice of one's physician and even of private practice itself was in jeopardy.

But interestingly enough, nothing happened. Opposition faded as the press and public showed enthusiasm for the experiment which—according to Mr. Ralph Hammerslee, director of the Albany Blue Cross plan—may very well reduce unnecessary diagnostic hospital admissions. "The trend of the times, we suspect," said an editorial in the local *Knickerbocker News,* "is away from the doctors, who may find themselves fighting a rear-guard action."

Though the reference here is to a local situation, it could apply as well to the national scene. The rear-guard action the doctors are now fighting is to preserve medical care as a form of small business; that is, an enterprise whose dynamic is profit. This attempt is bound to fail because in an era of high costs the system is becoming intolerable to large areas of the public—most dramatically, to the 16 million who are over sixty-five years of age—and because the conviction has become widespread in America that medical care is a basic social right. A medical care system responsive mainly to the present distribution of money obviously cannot fulfill this "right": the aged and the indigent are left out and those with modest means will deny themselves needed care.

Now if the principle of "right" is followed rigorously, the result must be a public health service, financed by taxes, like those in Scandinavia and Britain. But even if the principle is followed less rigorously, medical care will come to be considered a public utility, subject to the regulations—like prohibition of discriminatory pricing (doctors now vary their fees according to what the traffic will bear)—imposed upon other such businesses by the Robinson-Patman Act. These are businesses which serve a vital public interest, operate in an uninformed market (a layman cannot make a reasonably sound choice of doctors), and have monopolistic power arising from scarcity of supply.

To emphasize the business orientation of current medicine is neither novel nor impertinent. Over twenty years ago in Duke University Law School's remarkable symposium on medical care in *Law and Contemporary Problems,* I. S. Falk, one of our shrewdest medical economists, wrote prophetically:

> Through circumstances which no one planned and none foresaw a profession found itself in a business world. . . . Medicine of today cannot afford to drift complacently or without direction into the medicine of tomorrow, *unless society is prepared to see the virtues of a profession increasingly supplanted by the dynamics of business.* . . . The economic problems which arise [in medicine] cannot be defined solely in terms of consumer needs or demands, production costs and price policies. Other elements complicate any purely economic approach to the economic problems of medicine. There are ideals and humane considerations and elements of social prestige to be taken into account; *and many attributes of a professional service are to be distinguished from the characteristics of a trade relation.* (My italics.)

In fact, the most repellent abuses in medicine are traceable to the influence of business: unnecessary surgery, ghost surgery (while the patient is under anesthesia his personal physician is replaced by a specialist), fee splitting, and what Jerome Pollack, health program consultant for the AFL-CIO, has called "insurogenic medicine"—services designed to exploit the patient's health insurance.

Apart from these practices, however, organized medicine's official business ideology has itself had damaging consequences. No responsible observer now denies that there is a serious and growing shortage of American physicians and that

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the inadequacy in facilities and funds for our medical schools has been a cardinal factor. This is the message of the Bane report. Yet for some thirty years the AMA has hindered efforts to solve this problem by arguing against government aid. And much of the testimony given by AMA officials unmistakably suggests that at least part of the motive has been to preserve a restricted supply of physicians in the interest of bigger incomes for the profession. Indeed almost none of the AMA's views are defensible in terms of public interest; most, in fact, seem to derive ultimately from economic motives. The slogan "free choice of physician," for example, has been the main tactic used by organized medicine in fighting prepayment group practice or so-called "closed panel" medicine. What this slogan really proposes, however, is *obligatory* free choice, in which the patient is not allowed to choose a panel of physicians, but must pick an independent "solo" practitioner. Or again, the "fee for service" principle by which the doctor is paid for each visit or service rendered, has been found to be a major deterrent to preventive medicine: as often noted, it places a premium on illness, not on health. It also has been a stumbling block to the efforts of private insurance organizations to extend voluntary health insurance on a sound actuarial basis, for it makes the cost factor largely unknown.

Voluntary health insurance, incidentally, is now cherished by the AMA as staving off government intervention, but in the past it condemned this, too, as "socialistic." Fear of government at times has even cast the AMA in the awkward role of delaying the establishment of vital public health programs, like compulsory vaccination for smallpox and immunization against diphtheria, as well as federal grants-in-aid for maternal and child welfare and for VD control.*

Ironically enough, the AMA's opposition to the "corporate practice of medicine" originally arose from an attempt to prevent the professional standards of medical care from being compromised by the profit motive—as in the case of contract medicine in the 19th century, which involved soliciting patients and underbidding for doctor's services. Today, however, the shibboleth of corporate medicine is invoked by the AMA to fight efforts at protecting the public from the abuses that the profit system has created, sometimes even to the detriment of professional standards themselves.

At this stage, then, the struggles of American medicine can seem to have but one outcome: a reorganization of medical practice away from the model of business and replaced by a more rational and equitable system that will make the achievements of modern medical science available to all. This change may, and probably will, entail greater participation of government, both local, state, and federal, in medical affairs. It certainly means wider and stronger lay control. One of the strengths of present-day American society lies in its ability to combine private and governmental enterprise in fruitful partnership. But in any case, so long as medicine retains its identity as a *profession,* rather than as a business, doctors and patients alike stand to gain.

A number of observers are sanguine about the possibilities of medicine's gaining a higher standard of professionalism because of the influx of intellectuals and scholars. These observers point to the rise in the number of doctors in research, in academic medicine and, generally, to those in salaried positions which free them somewhat from the harmful pressures of the market place. The percentage of doctors in research and teaching has doubled in the past thirty years and, while 90 per cent of doctors were in general practice in 1930, only about 46 per cent are now. The research and academic men, it is said, have a profound distaste for the politics of the AMA (whose leaders mainly come from small towns and represent the small-town point of view) and the feeling is that simply by their own example they will in time change the policy positions of organized medicine for the better. Whether or not this hope is a reasonable one, there is no longer any doubt but that the American system of distributing medical services is ceasing to be controlled by the traditional policies of organized medicine and has entered a period of decisive revisions and reforms.

* See the Yale Law Journal, *The American Medical Association: Power, Purpose, and Politics in Organized Medicine* (May 1954).

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The Economics of Farming

To the Editor of Commentary:

I regret that Asher Brynes' "Economics of the Farm Problem" appeared in your August issue, for it is a poor month for a farmer to take the time to answer each of his provocative statements. But his use of the Conger dairy farm as "a splendid example" of the farmer unjustly bleeding the taxpayer is a blatant distortion. . . .

The facts which appear in Mrs. Conger's article concerning the Congers' income and net worth are as follows: the farm contains 720 acres, produces 1,000 quarts of milk per day, and receives an average price of 8.1 cents per quart. The herd consists of 100 head of registered Holstein milking cows and 100 young stock. The Congers grow 61 acres of wheat, and received in 1959 the loan price of $1.98 per bushel. Their sale of wheat was less than 9 per cent of their gross income. The farm is located in Southeastern Kansas, an area which has "poorer soil" than other sections of the state. Aside from an aerial photo of the farm there is no other "fact" presented. . . .

From the above Mr. Brynes assumes that the Holsteins are worth $600 apiece. As an owner of registered Holsteins, I would suggest that Mr. Brynes should be able to buy the Conger herd at an average price of no more than $300, perhaps less in Southeastern Kansas where the milk price appears to be quite low.

"Farmland," writes Mr. Brynes, "averages $111 per acre. Since this is an unusually well run farm, the land is easily worth $125 an acre or $90,000." He then assumes the buildings are worth $50,000 for a farm value of $140,000. The fly in the ointment is that the figure of $111 per acre for farmland includes improvements. . . . I suspect that if Mr. Brynes made a firm offer of $140,000 he might find himself the owner of the Conger dairy farm *including* stock and equipment and a radically changed point of view.

Mr. Brynes estimates a mortgage at $30,000 so "the Congers could sell out if they chose, for a quarter of a million dollars. . . . Thus in two thirds of the time it takes salaried persons employed by the government or industry to accumulate a retirement fund, the Congers have arrived. . ." Even assuming the validity of these figures, how can one compare a man who invests his savings in his own enterprise with a salaried employee? Would not a comparison with those who started their own manufacturing or retail firms in 1939 be more appropriate?

Using simple arithmetic, Mr. Brynes calculated the gross income of the Conger farm at $32,000, but objects to Mrs. Conger's system of bookkeeping which involves deducting a fair investment return of 6 per cent on net working capital and 4 per cent on net fixed capital before figuring profit. According to Mrs. Conger, the farm made little if any profit since 1952. But if a more conventional accounting system were used, it is hard to believe that the farm made any profit at all on a gross income of $32,000.

The Congers must employ at least two full-time men plus part-time help at harvest. Using conservative estimates for wages, taxes, equipment, livestock and plant depreciation, feed concentrates, seed . . . etc., there is hardly room for profit.

The above assumptions are based on the same questionable premises that are used by Mr. Brynes. . . . My point is that an armchair analysis of a single dairy farm is a poor thing from which to generalize. . . .

The following is presented in more general rebuttal of Mr. Brynes' thesis:

1. National personal income rose 6 per cent in 1959 over 1958; agricultural income dropped 13 per cent—Commerce Department release of August 14.

2. According to Washington statistics, the American family spends a smaller proportion of its income (including taxes for farm subsidies) for food—excluding processing and packaging—than before the current programs were inaugurated.

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3. "Every industrial nation in the world —that is, every rich society in the Western world—pays subsidies of one kind or another to agriculture. This does not make such subsidies 'right,' but it is strong presumptive evidence that agriculture cannot operate as an atomistic, free-market industry in a world of controls and administrative wage and price setting for other industries." —Concluding paragraph of "Farm Policy: A Look Backward and Forward" by Lauren Soth in July 1960 issue of *Social Research.*

RALPH O. SAMUEL

Ivyland, Pa.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Mr. Brynes uses facts and figures to suit his purpose. For example, he claims that current annual expenditures for the support and subsidizing of agriculture are $6 billion. He disregards the fact that farmers are not the sole recipients of this money. The $6 billion includes sums spent for feeding school children, for emergency famine relief, for the delivery of food to friendly nations in exchange for local currencies, for food bartered for stockpile materials, etc.

Also misleading is the example of the net income of a prosperous dairy farmer in Kansas. Mr. Brynes uses this example because, being based on an article in the *Saturday Evening Post,* he found it convenient to do so. But it might have been even simpler to use official government figures. These show that dairy farmers are far from prosperous. Their yearly net incomes in 1958 ranged from $3,341 in Western Wisconsin to $4,810 in the Central Northeast.

Mr. Brynes found the basis for government assistance to farmers "in the place that farmers have traditionally occupied in the American scheme of things." How would he explain the fact that most other Western nations subsidize their agricultural industries? He also overlooks the fact that subsidies, whether overt or hidden, are a characteristic of other segments of American economic life. . . .

LEON J. STECK

Washington, D. C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

We were interested in Mr. Brynes' use of the Conger material, particularly in the way he assumed that they could sell out for a quarter of a million dollars—and later moved the assumption into the status of fact. I don't know what the Congers' equity is worth, or what part of the equity comes from the rise in land values as compared to re-invested earnings, but I doubt it comes near this assumed figure. Also I doubt that non-milking heifers are worth the assumed value of $600. Also, the bookkeeping methods, which Mr. Brynes questioned, happen to be those developed and recommended by the farm management specialists of the Extension Service.

In any case, we think the article made Mrs. Conger's case that even large, efficient farms of this type haven't exactly prospered in recent times.

JOHN BIRD
Associate Editor
The Saturday Evening Post
Philadelphia, Pa.

MR. BRYNES *writes:*

The farm problem does have a way of getting wrapped up and hidden away from the scrutiny of city people by an all but impenetrable camouflage of complication. Here we have three responses to an effort to analyze it as a national issue. Let me remind readers of COMMENTARY that I said current farm legislation dates from the 30's when a fourth of the population lived on farms. Today agriculture is a much larger industry than it was at that time, yet the farm population has fallen to less than a tenth, and the commercial farmers and their families who grow and market 85 per cent of our food and fiber number scarcely more than 3 per cent of the nation. There has been, obviously, a tremendous concentration of agricultural resources. And because the laws of the 30's still prevail, there is a shameful neglect of the needs of low-income farmers, who vastly outnumber the commercial farm group.

I agree with Mr. Samuel and Mr. Bird that the analysis of a single dairy farm is a poor thing from which to generalize about farming. However, my valuation of the Conger farm was based on estimates of the various details made for me by the U.S.D.A. specialists here in Washington, D. C. I would enjoy setting them forth in full, but perhaps it will suffice to note that Mr.

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Samuel's evaluation of the Conger farm is about two-thirds of my estimate, and Mrs. Conger's own figure (in a separate communication forwarded to me by Mr. Bird) is two-thirds of Mr. Samuel's.

It is more difficult to answer Mr. Steck because every statement he makes is questionable as to fact or inference. He does not even have the dollar figures on the "average" net incomes of two (out of five) types of dairy farmers straight. But anyway, as I indicated, averages such as these merely prove that some farmers should be in another business, and many need public aid.

My point, to put it plainly, is that capitalists have no right to relief at the public expense; and that the poorer farmers—our American peasantry who live in unbelievable squalor—most certainly do. If I may be permitted an expression of personal feeling, I don't like to see the commercial farmers hogging practically all the public funds available for agriculture.

The way in which they have been able to accomplish this miracle of political juggling in our laboristic society is through their customary identification of labor income, *wages,* with entrepreneurial income, or *profit.* This mix-up enables commercial farmers to sit on assets worth many thousands of dollars, pay themselves interest on these assets, as *investors,* pay the family labor they use, as *employers,* and cry that their own "wages" are 75 cents an hour or some such figure. This is, of course, a good deal less than industrial or city workers receive, but they have no investment income and can't hand out jobs to their dependents. So I still say it's a political argument dressed up in bookkeeping terminology.

Rockefeller as New Aristocrat

To the Editor of Commentary:

Dennis Wrong in his "Rockefeller as Liberal Hero" [September] neglected to extract those very phenomena which Dennis Wrong, sociologist, would have readily observed in his lectures . . . when I was his student. . . .

Nelson Rockefeller—Political Force, 1960—cannot be realistically viewed without some analysis of the development of the American aristocracy of the 20th century: first generation begat the money—in abundance; the second concentrated on polishing and chrome-plating the name; the third offered the varnished picture to the populace to be counted and voted upon. Can Mr. Rockefeller as liberal—hero or otherwise—be examined without relevance to this newly-created aristocracy? Nor, indeed, is Mr. Kennedy to be viewed any differently. One difference between the two, in this pattern, is that Mr. Kennedy is attempting to telescope the second and third phases into one. . . .

Franklin Feldman

New York, N. Y.

American Soldiers

To the Editor of Commentary:

In a review of Morris Janowitz's *The Professional Soldier* [September], Andrew Hacker, arguing from the Korean prisoner-of-war camp scandal and the general combat record of "our civilians-at-arms," concludes that "Americans are not cut out for being good soldiers." . . .

Nevertheless, snafued by mistaken strategic assumptions, the American soldier in Korea fought well enough to bring to a halt the massive Chinese attack. . . . Going back a bit further, the Americans who fought at Guadalcanal, Tarawa, Salerno, Anzio, the Rapido (where they were butchered), the hedgerows, Mortain, Bastogne, and the Roer River, against foes who certainly were the best around at the time, did not do too badly either. . . .

Of course Americans have run away on occasion—but even the Japanese surrendered in Manchuria in 1945. It is just possible that survivors of the Japanese elite officer corps might point to Mr. Hacker's explanation—what can professionals do with civilians-in-arms who surrender?

Interview and questionnaire sampling procedures to determine such deeply mysterious matters as the behavior of men under extreme stress may, just possibly, not be the conclusively revealing affairs they are often taken to be. And the encouragement of such devices by a professional class like our own Pentagon bureaucracy does not suggest the objective, truth-seeking quest one might suppose. . . .

David Driscoll

Brookfield Center, Connecticut

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MR. HACKER *writes:*

Mr. Driscoll raises some vital questions in his letter. The problem, we agree, is not one of cowardice. In stress situations our soldiers have usually done well. The question at issue is whether the American fighting man is a "good soldier" by comparative standards. Do American soldiers require so many material comforts that their combat effectiveness is disproportionately impaired when such resources are in short supply? Our minimum requirements in the field are high indeed compared with those of other armies. How far are American soldiers responsive to military discipline and unquestioning obedience? Lacking a class-based officer corps or an authoritarian outlook, we are again at a comparative disadvantage. Will American soldiers possess a sense of purpose or a vivid idea of what they are "fighting for" in future wars? In terms of ideological commitment, our civilians-at-arms face morale problems that do not plague other nations. These are questions about American society as much as they are about the military establishment. Mr. Driscoll is correct in saying that the answers transcend "interview and questionnaire sampling procedures."

Measuring the Open Mind

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his review of my book, *The Open and Closed Mind* [August], Lewis Coser gives the reader a false impression . . . that I equate ideological commitment with the closed mind and, conversely, that I equate the open mind with an absence of commitment. . . .

It should be obvious from a reading of my book that I find wide variations in the degree of closed-mindedness among Communists, Socialists, and Conservatives, among Jews, Catholics, and Protestants. This means that while many individuals have commitments to varying ideologies, some of them hold their commitments in a relatively closed-minded way, and others in a relatively open-minded way. Moreover, if our open-minded subjects are really as uncommitted and empty-headed as Coser contends they are, it would be virtually impossible to account for the many findings attesting to their superior aesthetic and cognitive performance when compared with closed-minded subjects.

Coser expresses displeasure bordering on irritation with my contention that a subject scores as "closed-minded" if he agrees strongly with the following statement (from the Dogmatism Scale): "It is only when a person devotes himself to an ideal or cause that life becomes meaningful." Does this mean that to be open-minded we should not have ideals or champion causes? Not at all! It is only to say that there may also be other ways in which life can become meaningful. The crucial word in the above statement is "only." Delete this word and re-read the sentence. Its psychological meaning is now altogether different, and agreement with it would no longer be a symptom of closed-mindedness. But my data clearly show that agreeing with this statement as it now stands (with the word "only" included) is one indication of a closed mind.

In sum, I have felt obliged to take Lewis Coser to task for not having seen that my work on the open and closed mind is in hearty agreement with his comment that "a committed man by no means need have a closed mind." The issues I deal with do not concern commitment vs. its lack, but rather differing styles of commitment.

(PROFESSOR) MILTON ROKEACH
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan

MR. COSER *writes:*

My review of Professor Rokeach's book did not quarrel with his personal beliefs, which are no doubt wholly admirable, but rather with the series of statements which he used in order to distinguish open from closed minds. Hence his agreement with my comment that "a committed man by no means need have a closed mind" is hardly at issue here. What *is* at issue is that many of the questions he used as indicators of a closed mind are only indicators of lack of commitment.

Lack of commitment would not seem on the face of it to interfere with splendid cognitive performances or superior aesthetic abilities, so that Professor Rokeach's comments about this point are hardly pertinent. No doubt, people hold commitments in a more or less closed- or open-minded manner; but the issue here is whether the Rokeach scales are adequate to measure closure and openness.

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The Irrational Karl Shapiro*

THEODORE SOLOTAROFF

KARL SHAPIRO is, as he says, a "critic in spite of himself"—a man of feeling, intuition, and personal taste, who over the years has had little inclination and less use for the abstruse ways of modern criticism. To be sure, he admits that he has written some of it himself but usually in an offhand manner and mainly because in our "Age of Criticism" even the poets have had to write the stuff to get along. Recently, however, he has found a use for criticism and an urgent one: to damn it, along with damning the poetry that has gone hand in hand with it as the dominant literature of nearly the past half-century. As might be expected, the chief targets of this deliberately explosive collection of essays are Eliot and Pound and their camp, the New Criticism. But as part of his bold campaign to rescue poetry from its captors and to clear the ground for a new Romanticism ("Irrationalism" is perhaps the more apt term), Shapiro also attempts a demolition job up and down the modern literary front. Eliot is wired to Auden and Yeats, Marxism to Freudianism, *Partisan Review* to *Kenyon* to the *Explicator*, "Original Sin" to sociology, the "poetry of ideas" to the *autotelic* or non-ideological form of criticism. "It is necessary to demolish the great empty Bastille of criticism . . ." says Shapiro, and by this he means all the modes of our literary culture—the creative as well as the critical—that restrain the natural, open, mysterious play of the human psyche, the free spirit which he believes must inform a literature if it is to be both alive and relevant. With the removal of our formalistic, bookish, and idea-ridden state of letters, Shapiro also believes that natural judgment and taste would replace the elaborate equipment which readers of poetry have been given to carry in their heads, that a vast, "healthy" literary audience would come in view, and that the men writing for it would follow in the steps of the true poet-prophets of life, uninhibited and uncontaminated by culture and society: Whitman and Henry Miller, particularly; Blake, Rimbaud, Dylan Thomas, D. H. Lawrence, and William Carlos Williams as well. Poetry would again become personal and vital, direct and sincere, accepting and benign; it would also be animated by what Shapiro calls "cosmic consciousness," or, if the poet chanced to be Jewish, by "God consciousness."

All of which Shapiro proffers seriously, and even angrily. I think there is much to be said in favor of the stand he takes, but there would be a good deal more if he had argued its issues with more precision and thoroughness and if he had paid more attention to reality and less to his own gestures of defiance and reverence. It is not that Shapiro shouldn't allow himself to get angry; in fact, one of the things I like about his book is that he cares enough about literature to get sore at what has been happening to it under the influence of a fancy, restrictive, and increasingly academic set of prescribed manners. "Against the hollow, impersonal voices of the official literati we must raise the sound of the living human voice," snaps Shapiro and I, for one, have no wish to gainsay him. Similarly Shapiro's zeal is itself liberating when it conveys that rare and unmistakable happiness of a critic who is writing about Whitman or Henry Miller because he is getting something of personal value out of them, who has not merely found a topic for a professionally acceptable essay. Still anger and zeal do not take the place of pertinacity, and they lead easily to a kind of self-indulgent unserious-

* A review of *In Defense of Ignorance* by Karl Shapiro (Random House, 338 pp., $4.00).

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ness of their own, with which *In Defense of Ignorance* is, unfortunately, loaded.

PART of the trouble is that Shapiro is convinced that extreme opinions and a fulminating style are required if one is to break in upon the closed circuit of serious literary opinion that T. S. Eliot has created. This is silly, if understandable. Also much of his apparent critical distemper results from what I take to be his new commitment to being deliberately personal, irrational, and wild—a more serious matter, which I shall say something about as I go along. Yet there is little besides their impudence to explain judgments such as the following, chosen almost at random: "But the career of Auden is curiously without center; it is uninteresting. It consists of a series of reports on the goodness and the badness of English poets and their ideas." Or again: Yeats "belongs to the past, with all its claptrap of history and myth." Or again: "Eliot's style of deliberate plagiarism is the first symptom of failure to locate the language—in his case a lifelong admission of defeat."

It should be said that Shapiro has his charming and funny side, and indeed his sense of humor and a saving strain of self-irony help as much as anything to keep his book sane. But on the whole, he too frequently wants to write as a man who has had it and to show that if those implicated in the great conspiracy of modern letters would wake up, as he has finally done, and see the light, would trust only their real intuitions and judgments and then speak their own minds, all would begin to go well. But if Shapiro's judgments can be suddenly and deadly accurate, his general method of a highly provocative and free-wheeling impressionism leads more frequently to his evading the need to bear down on his subject when the going gets tough, and then instead of being bravely irrational, he becomes simply naive and unintelligent. "The New Criticism is one of the more noxious by-products of the culture religion and it is too large a subject for me." At too many points *In Defense of Ignorance* reminded me of nothing so much as that moment at a party when, in the middle of a serious discussion, the local "creative writer" turns to the nearest listener and says, "Come on, let's get out of here."

All of which is the last thing that is going to move the massive and solid reputations of Eliot, Pound, Yeats, and Auden out of the way and give poetry back to the common reader and to the sort of poets that Shapiro likes and would like now to be himself. The only effective argument against one kind of major poetry is, of course, another kind; the real answer to *The Waste Land* is not Shapiro's arguments but Robert Lowell's great *Life Studies*. Shapiro himself says as much. But that he should have chosen to assert the claims of the anti-reason, anti-art, anti-Establishment position at this time is itself significant, and later I want to come back to a few of the topical implications of his stand.

The personal implication is that *In Defense of Ignorance* has been written by a more or less typical modern poet who is going through a state of conversion. The basic text is not "Stop reading Eliot and the critics and start reading Whitman," but rather, in Shapiro's words, "Everything we are taught is false. . . . Change your life." And this is finally what he is saying to himself within the pages of these essays; he is trying passionately to talk himself into something: namely, that he can still break loose from a decade or more of accepting as a poet and promoting as editor of *Poetry* the literary habits and norms of the age, that he can still get out of his commitments to reason, restraint, and sophistication and become irrational, excessive, and natural—a "white aboriginal" as Lawrence called Whitman. " 'The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom,' " affirms Shapiro in Blake's words. Much of the interest, and possibly explanation, of his book comes from watching him go as far (or "far out") as he does to arrive at irrational positions that will allow him to touch bottom again after all these years of drifting with the tide of acceptable academic poetry and criticism. The excessive combativeness of Shapiro's negative judgments—particularly against Auden, who, for all his "rationalism," has clearly been one of Shapiro's own leading influences—the almost superstitious veneration of Whitman and Miller, the eager praise for Wilhelm Reich, the new affiliations to Zen and Hasidism and even to science: all of this bespeaks the attempt to get back to the "ignorant" and wayward young

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poet who wrote *Essay on Rime*—and set forth anew. *In Defense of Ignorance* contains, in fact, the sudden confessions of guilt that begin by blaming others, the hysterical talk about conspiracies, and that special mixture of dogmatism and self-hypnotism which we have learned in our time to associate with another kind of conversion and return.

WHEN I have said all this, I do not mean that Shapiro's book is unwarranted or his zeal wholly misplaced. Personal excesses and doctrinaire biases aside, he is closely in touch with the fundamental literary problem of the present—the problem of skillful, highly trained writers, particularly poets, to break through literature to a direct and meaningful encounter with contemporary realities. As a veteran of the literary age—which, however much it will continue to stand for the contemporary one in the quarterlies and the university time schedules, has pretty clearly played itself out—Shapiro is well worth listening to. His cardinal point that "poetry has lost its significance, its relevance and even its meaning in our time," seems to me largely true. Nor does the matter stop there, for the canons of modern poetry have had an enormous influence on the literary consciousness of the period, so that the terms and standards of T. E. Hulme, Eliot, Richards, Ransom, *et al.*—derived largely from one way of reading one type of verse—have been applied willy-nilly to the theory and practice of fiction, drama, and of criticism itself.

Thus it won't do to conclude, as has one dean of modern poetry, that Shapiro is merely going through an "intemperate" phase; or to say, as has one of our prominent scholar-critics, that this book is only a defense of "willfulness," an attempt at rebellion which lacks its proper "point in time." These are merely facile ways to ignore the fair number of hits that he makes against the poetry of Eliot, Pound, and Yeats (who, incidentally, is not so "brilliantly invulnerable," as Richard Ellman says he is, to Shapiro's charges that he dallied in the occult, that his visions of history "are so much doodling in the margins of his mind," and that his fear of the irrational frequently led him into an excessive "stylization and depersonalization of experience"). Also Shapiro's critics dismiss without a hearing the justifiable basis of his point that the New Poetry or New Humanism or New Classicism, call it what you will, has had an inhibiting and narrowing effect upon recent literature and that writers such as William Carlos Williams and Henry Miller may very well be the ones who, as he says, can "give literature back to life."

But if Henry Miller, for one, proves to be a vitalizing and truth-giving influence, I doubt if it will be in his role of one of Shapiro's "poets of the cosmic consciousness." Nor does Miller's best and most influential writing seem to me to embody the conditions for the renewal of poetry that Shapiro says it does: that poetry "must repair to the wilderness, outside society, outside the city gates . . . " and so forth. It is precisely when Miller is in society, implicated in its codes, that he demonstrates his amazing ability to get underneath his experience and swing it gracefully to the light. Shapiro comes much closer to stating the conditions by which poetry can be renewed and the particular power and appeal of Miller himself, when he adumbrates George Orwell's point about Miller's extraordinary capacity for "acceptance," which, incidentally, is least impressive when Miller, like Margaret Fuller, decides to accept the cosmos. Shapiro also comes much closer to stating these conditions of renewal in his remarks about William Carlos Williams' capacity for "living the life of the poet," by which Shapiro means the "man to whom the daily life is the poetry itself, whatever his occupation." Here is where Miller and Williams and Whitman make a viable common cause: their relish for personal daily experience; their ability to wind themselves into their reactions and remain articulate, truthful, and accepting; their common grasp of what Orwell calls the *Realpolitik* of the mind; their faith in the human community, which means something only because they have kept faith with the human in themselves; finally, their love of naturalness, spontaneity, and concreteness that helped them to lift up living and contemporary speech, as well as experience, to the level of art.

THIS I take also to be the valuable side of Shapiro's position, stripped of his own esoteric and "cultural" features such as the call

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for political and social disaffiliation and the advertisements for his heady brew of scientism, mysticism, populism, Reichian psychology, and the "higher consciousness" system of P. D. Ouspensky. Whether Shapiro can make poetry out of his affiliations with the "cosmodemonic" remains to be seen; as part of a program to reinvigorate and redirect the literary imagination, it seems to me largely beside the point. At this hour of history, when the daily life goes on in ways that are as provisional and fantastic as any writer who is really conscious could wish, the relevant poetry will not need to "experience a sense of total unity with all nature, or the universe, or some degree of that experience." To be conscious of, and faithful to, the extraordinary nature of the so-called ordinary, contemporary life—as over the years the poetry of Auden has been—will be enough. Shapiro is too hot for mysticism by fiat, too willing to let his concern with the irrational and its possibilities flow into misty doctrines that evade the human situation at either end by vaporing into primitivism or supernaturalism.

A case in point is his discussion of the Jewish writer in America, whose special obligation is to regain his "God-consciousness" and establish it "centrally in his work." This is asking a lot, particularly as it involves nothing less than an inspired leap beyond Jewishness as religion, a content-less assertion of the existence of God, or, in other words, the pure flame of faith burning in a void. Nothing could be more literary, though it appears in a book that consistently damns bookishness, than is Shapiro's discussion of Jewish consciousness which he takes wholesale from Martin Buber. And he unwittingly acknowledges the gratuitousness of the demand when he offers as his leading example of "the poetry of the Jew" Saul Bellow's *Augie March*. Possibly it is, but would Shapiro wish to call it an example of a "God-centered literature"? On the same subject of the problem and opportunity of the Jewish writer in America, Bellow himself comes much closer to the mark when he speaks of the Jew's special experience of "the strangeness of discontinuity and of a constant immense change . . ." and goes on to say that "the narrowly confined and perfect unit of a man . . . would prove to be outside all that is significant in our modern lives, lives characterized by the new, provisional, changing, dangerous, universal." Written almost a decade ago, Bellow's remarks are, it goes without saying, even more pertinent today, and those of us who, like Shapiro, are interested in Jewish consciousness and in its relations to a type of literary consciousness that has begun to emerge and spread would do well to consider them.

To this latter consciousness *In Defense of Ignorance* itself gives valuable witness. From what I can see, a number of Shapiro's assumptions (including some that are silent or only half-expressed) function as a kind of critical supplement to the recent poetry of Robert Lowell and Theodore Roethke, and to developments in fiction represented, for example, by the appearance on the scene and the more programmatic stories in *The Noble Savage,* or by Bellow's fiction or Norman Mailer's *Advertisements* or the section from James Baldwin's novel published by *Partisan Review*. At one end is Salinger's "Seymour, an Introduction," at the other is William Burroughs' *Naked Lunch*. In the life of our time, with its steady erosion of sense and center, the truth for a growing number of writers has moved from somewhere in the middle to some personally fertile extreme, reached by tapping the drives and fantasies that flow powerfully beneath reason and intellect. Thus, the writer arranges some head-on encounter of the self with one or more of its obsessions and reports it as candidly and concretely as possible, whether as autobiography or not. The result is a brooding and souped-up naturalism that places a high premium on sincerity and energy of invention, for which the current term "wild" is as appropriate as any. I would place Shapiro's book in this development and read it as another unmistakable sign that the literary atmosphere has begun to change radically. What convinces me is not only the personal and contemporary significance of his attack upon the modern tradition but also the exuberance and ruthlessness with which he is willing to cash in its whole achievement. It will take exuberance and ruthlessness to deliver the new in poetry and some of those who accomplish it will no doubt be written off as "wild men," as Wordsworth and Shelley were, by their more complacent and reasonable contemporaries.

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Mosaics in Israel

ISRAEL: ANCIENT MOSAICS. Introduction by MICHAEL AVI-YONAH, preface by MEYER SCHAPIRO. New York Graphic Society by arrangements with UNESCO. 18 pp. with illustrations. $18.00.

Reviewed by MOSES HADAS

THE GRANDIOSE MOSAICS which all the world knows—at Santa Maria Maggiore at Rome of the 5th century, at San Vitale at Ravenna of the 6th, at Torcello and Palermo of the 12th and 13th—were expensive decorations for the walls of monumental buildings. But from the Hellenistic period through the Byzantine and from the Euphrates to the Thames, mosaic was used to pave floors, and was relatively as common, and as varied in quality and taste, as rugs are today. The masterly Alexander battlepiece from Pompeii (2nd century B.C.E.), the sensational "Bikini girls" at Piazza Armerina in Sicily (3rd century C.E.), and the countless excellent examples from Antioch and its environs illustrate the abundance and the range. Over five hundred specimens are known in Israel alone.

It is to mosaics that the volume on Israel in the Unesco World Art Series is devoted. It is a princely volume. The colored plates, thirty-two in number, are judiciously chosen and reproduced with stunning fidelity. The introduction, by Professor Michael Avi-Yonah, the acknowledged master in the art of the ancient synagogue, is an expert treatment of the artists and their techniques, the special problems of synagogue mosaics, their stylistic elements and their aesthetic and historical importance, and the relationship between the art of the church and the synagogue. Professor Meyer Schapiro's learned and perceptive preface considers the place of the mosaics in the general history of aesthetic taste and expression. Illuminating distinctions are drawn between provincial and metropolitan elements, the Greek and the native, true archaism and imperfect craftsmanship, the conceptual and the representational, the unique and the typical.

The specimens presented are drawn from synagogues, churches, and some secular structures built mainly in the 5th and 6th centuries in the area between Gaza and the Sea of Galilee. The subjects are geometrical designs, animals and vegetation, cult objects, and religious symbols. Like the wall paintings at Pompeii and Dura all derive from standard copybook repertories. The execution is generally mediocre. Far the most striking monument is the synagogue at Beth Alpha, which contains a good Zodiac with the Signs labelled in Hebrew, and an elaborate Sacrifice of Isaac. Here, reading from right to left, is the altar with tongues of flame; Isaac, bound and somewhat startled; Abraham, knife in hand, his attention arrested by the voice of God; the ram which is to substitute for Isaac caught in a thicket; the two servants left with the ass. The persons are labelled in Hebrew, the whole work signed in Greek by a father and son bearing Semitic names. The figures do not constitute a unified composition but are rather a series of disparate symbols. The drawing is naive and the coloring monotonously garish, but there is an engaging freshness about the whole. Here as in the other specimens, we have a telling index to sociological and religious as well as aesthetic levels.

THERE is a peculiar fitness in the sponsorship of this volume by an agency of the United Nations. The object of the United Nations is to reconcile competing claims of jealous sovereignties with the interests of humanity as a whole; the historical phenomenon which this book documents affords an example of practical symbiosis. Even when individual cultural manifestations seem to be insulated and independent, they are deviations which grow out of, and eventually return to enrich, the main cultural stream. The technique of mosaic was not a Jewish or local invention, but was adopted, as was the basilica type of building, even for the synagogue, which is the focus of Jewish life. The attractions of the medium even overcame a specific Biblical injunction against artistic representations of living creatures. But this did not mean rejection of Jewish values, for what the artist chose to represent was an eminently religious theme. The lesson, in turn, of unquestioning obedience on the one hand and divine mercy on the other is not limited to the communicants of the synagogue. It would have been a pity if the *parnassim* at Beth Alpha had not bor-

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rowed an effective artistic device from the general store, and a pity too if they had not used the medium for propagating their own contribution to the store.

The Right to Be a Slave

CANNIBALS ALL!: OR, SLAVES WITHOUT MASTERS. By GEORGE FITZHUGH. Edited by C. VANN WOODWARD. Harvard University Press. xxxix, 261 pp. $4.50.

Reviewed by STANLEY M. ELKINS

THE Harvard University Press is publishing a new historical series, the "John Harvard Library," whose purpose is to rescue "significant books and documents from the American past," hitherto long out of print and all but impossible to find, and to make them once more generally available. To include *Cannibals All!*, George Fitzhugh's classic defense of ante-bellum Negro slavery, was something of an inspiration, particularly with the handsome format and the wonderfully subtle introductory essay by C. Vann Woodward.

Despite its wildly reactionary tone, this was probably the most imaginative book to emerge from all the polemics that formed the intellectual background of our Civil War. In it, the reader who is willing to make the effort may see American values and institutions through the eyes of a man who not only favored slavery but also hated precisely those elements of our culture—democracy, freedom of expression, capitalism, political and social equality—we define automatically as admirable and virtuous.

The South was convinced by the 1850's, after twenty-five years of abolitionist agitation, that it was being deliberately victimized by a fanatical campaign to subvert its peace and security. Southern writers, therefore—like Southern politicians—naturally came to feel a patriotic responsibility for defending the values and mores of their homeland. George Fitzhugh accepted this duty with alacrity, played his role with a skill that bordered on genius, and became a leading figure in the debate over slavery. And yet history has left us a curiously unfocused picture of what Fitzhugh really represented, and at least two markedly different versions of what his ideas actually were. There were two Fitzhughs—the defender of slavery and the enemy of exploitative capitalism—and the student of ante-bellum culture is at least obliged to assess the two separately before re-combining them.

As a "propagandist" in the modern, demagogic sense of the word, George Fitzhugh was in many ways a failure. He was too logical, too uncompromising, and too honest. He refused, in his defense of slavery, to use the one argument—racial inferiority—that carried real weight in the North despite all the abolitionists' equalitarian polemics. He scorned any justification of slavery which would require that the Negro be defined as anything less than a full human being. The whole point for Fitzhugh was that although admittedly few Negroes were capable of living as free men, neither was the vast majority of any race. "We conclude," he announced, "that about nineteen out of every twenty individuals have 'a natural and inalienable right' to be taken care of and protected, to have guardians, trustees, husbands, or masters; in other words, they have a natural and inalienable right to be slaves." Since slavery was the most sensible arrangement for the average human being, it was the moral duty of the South to say so, and to "vindicate that institution in the abstract." Vindicating slavery in the abstract, however, was hardly the way to win support for Southern views in an increasingly libertarian North. "To secure true progress, we must unfetter genius and chain down mediocrity. Liberty for the few—Slavery in every form for the mass." When George Fitzhugh said that, incredulous Northerners must have thought they were hearing a declaration of war on free society.

BUT why, if Fitzhugh hoped to influence Northern public opinion (and the evidence is clear that he did), was he so unconcerned about the feelings and attitudes of the average Northerner? It was not a matter of obtuseness; on the contrary, Fitzhugh was probably the most sensitive of the Southern writers, carefully avoiding personal insult even when dealing with a master of invective like Garrison, and never questioning the good faith of the South's bitterest enemies. Unlike other Southern writers he could credit an abolitionist with good sense, especially when it could be turned to his own

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advantage, which was often. I believe that the key to this paradox, and to the special quality of Fitzhugh's writing, is that he was not addressing the average Northerner at all; he was addressing the very men whom his fellow Southerners feared and hated most while disdaining to hold true discourse with them: the intellectual leaders of the antislavery movement. Fitzhugh was probably the only writer on either side of the Mason-Dixon line who made a serious effort to engage the best minds of the opposition in real debate rather than rhetorical argument. He used every device to call Northern attention to his books. His polemical style was deliberately designed to cut through the moral complacency which (he thought) blinded even the most perceptive Northern critics to the realities of Southern slavery and—equally important—to the facts of American capitalism. This is why Fitzhugh's favorite tactic for defending slavery was to assume the offensive, and lash out against this or that cruelty or hypocrisy in Northern life.

At the core of Fitzhugh's attack on free society was the assertion that its basic economic arrangement, capitalism, was merely a form of white slavery which enabled the capitalist to extract value from the laborer, the ultimate source of all value. He did not deny that the Southern planter took similar advantage of his slaves, but the planter in return provided care and security for the slave and his family throughout their lives. This, Fitzhugh insisted, was why the planter's profits were less than those of the Northern factory owner. Over the long run "the master allows the slave to retain a larger share of the results of his own labor than do the employees of free labor."

In the end we are "cannibals all"; everywhere the strong take what advantage they can of the weak. But Southern society, unlike that of the North, had long recognized the inevitability of exploitation (civilized life could not be maintained otherwise), and had taken steps to mitigate its worst abuses. When the weak were made the *property* of the strong, the latter were in effect guaranteeing to the former the basic needs of life. The slave, by his very dependency, had claims on his master, and a power over him, that were denied the free laborer. The economic unit which was thus created took its values and standards from the family rather than from the marketplace. Northern society, meanwhile, insisted that all men were equal (when in fact they were nothing of the sort), and thus the strong were actively encouraged to exploit the weak in a setting where every man was "free" to drive the best, or worst, possible bargain he could get.

This marketplace morality was universally accepted in the North as a natural corollary to individual freedom and equality. In such an exploitative setting the generous emotions of family life must be confined to the precincts of the family circle. In the South, on the other hand, according to Fitzhugh, the patriarchal structure of the plantation blurred the sharp line between family and labor force; family standards were not limited to the family group but were projected outward and allowed to permeate every aspect of community life. This was the secret of the South's great stability; the South was free from the social and political agitation that plagued the rest of the country.

Using the same material that Karl Marx would use ten years later in *Das Kapital*, Fitzhugh predicted that the exploitation of labor in Northern society, driven by self-interest, would become steadily worse. He saw a drift into a grim economic jungle, a drift not easily arrested since its basic cause was an unrestricted individualism which the Western world—the Northern United States above all—mistakenly called "progress."

William Lloyd Garrison exploded when he read this, but he nonetheless had to admit the adroitness of Fitzhugh's attacks on free society. The modern reader is himself baffled by the strange mixture of insight and blindness that seems to characterize so much of Fitzhugh's work. Fitzhugh's picture of Northern society was grossly unfair, but the Virginian perceived with great accuracy things that many another thinker would not get around to seeing until about 1890, not the least of which was the strong pharisaical strain in bourgeois liberalism. At the same time his commitment to a patriarchal order, as C. Vann Woodward points out, was neither insincere nor unreasonable. "The anthropological, sociological, and political realities of Virginian society," Woodward comments, "were those of the patriarchal family." The ideas of George Fitzhugh were

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certainly as deeply rooted in the life of Northern Virginia as was the liberalism of such enlightened patriarchs as Patrick Henry, Washington, and Jefferson.

There are just two large catches in this whole question of George Fitzhugh, "sociologist of the South." One is that both he and the Virginian past out of which he wrote represented something rather special and apart. As for the ante-bellum South as a whole, however, it was not a patriarchal society any more at all (if indeed it ever had been), nor was Southern slavery a patriarchal institution. It was a capitalistic one. The planter was above all a businessman producing a staple crop for a world market and his plantation represented a heavy capital investment in land and labor which he might very well lose if he could not operate it at a profit. His concern with such matters as labor costs, efficiency, and overhead was not unlike that of the Northern factory owner, while a plantation managed by an overseer for a non-resident owner had far more in common with a factory than with a patriarchal family. The legal system that supported Negro slavery, moreover, contained no "family" rights for the slave whatever, though in its concern for the property rights of the master it reflected at every point the needs of a profoundly capitalistic culture.

The other catch involves the perennial problem of whether you judge a man's ideas on their merits or consider the setting out of which he produced them and in which they had their effect. The alternatives are never that simple, of course, but some such dilemma must always plague any exercise in intellectual history. In the last analysis the only side of George Fitzhugh to which anyone, North or South, would listen was Fitzhugh the pro-slavery apologist, Fitzhugh the passionate defender of a South whose distinctive institution was Negro slavery.

The thinkers of North and South never made contact with each other as intellectuals. What would have happened if they had, and if each had really listened? Fitzhugh would have been forced to recognize, and admit, that slavery as the South practiced it was intensely capitalistic. His Northern counterpart would have had to see the extent to which the language of individualism, equality, and self-reliance was the language of exploitation. And what then? What of the constituencies that supported these men as spokesmen for their sections? They would have paid no further attention. The spokesmen would have been spokesmen no longer, and history might very likely have reflected not a trace of them.

Fiction of Violence & Pain

SET THIS HOUSE ON FIRE. By WILLIAM STYRON. Random House. 507 pp. $5.75.

Reviewed by ELMER BORKLUND

"THE only true experience," observes the protagonist of *Set This House on Fire*, "is the one where a man learns to love himself. And his country." This is a terrible simplification, no doubt, but unfortunately it is only one of many simplifications Styron indulges in freely so that his hero may come to scrutinize himself and his country without disgust.

In view of Styron's past performances (*Lie Down in Darkness* in 1951 and *The Long March* in 1953), which quickly placed him in the company of two other important new writers, John Horne Burns and Norman Mailer, and—rather less justly—made his name a kind of refuge for those who were increasingly hard put to defend postwar American fiction against charges of dullness, commercialism, or irrelevance, it is difficult to think of any recent novel which so thoroughly disappoints one's expectations as this new one, handsomely and expensively gotten up and reverently offered by the publishers to a public already half-prepared to believe in its significance. The obvious faults, the unremitting pretentiousness and melodrama, are troubling enough, yet not so troubling (or perhaps so instructive) as the basic reasons for Styron's failure here.

As usual, Styron uses a complex time scheme, but once the reader has unscrambled the sequence of events, the central concerns are clear enough: through the eyes of Peter Leverett, a young American who has been working in Rome, we witness the spiritual decline and rebirth of Cass Kinsolving, another expatriate, an artist haunted by the war, his memories of the South, and his entire awareness of America's recent past. Kinsolving falls under the influence of still

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another expatriate, Mason Flagg, an American so corrupt that Styron evidently wishes us to accept him as an incarnation of evil itself. Flagg's supposed rape and murder of an Italian girl is the last of a series of outrages which force Kinsolving, dissolute as he is, to take his stand: either he will give in wholly to the Nothingness which Flagg and his circle represent, or he may try to oppose Flagg's sins against Being. Kinsolving rebels and kills Flagg—but is allowed to go free by Migliore, the philosophic policeman who sees in the murder a possibility for Kinsolving's regeneration. Later we learn that the girl had in fact been attacked by a half-wit peasant, a detail which makes no difference to Migliore or Leverett: purged of his guilt, Kinsolving is able to return to America, his wife, and his work.

"It's really curious," he tells Leverett in retrospect, "this business about evil—what it is, where it is, whether it's a reality, or just a figment of the mind. Whether it's a sickness like cancer, something that can be cut out and destroyed . . . or whether it's something you can't cure at all, but have to stomp on like you would a flea carrying the bubonic plague, getting rid of the disease and the carrier all at once." Both theories, Kinsolving goes on, are as evil, in their lack of balance, as the evil which they are intended to combat; yet Styron himself seems close to accepting the second possibility. Kinsolving destroys Flagg and gains his freedom, and even Leverett repeats the same process symbolically (earlier, in an auto accident, Leverett had nearly killed an Italian peasant, but now, as he helps Kinsolving unravel the violent past, he too is released: the peasant suddenly recovers and Leverett, like Kinsolving, is ready to make his peace with America and with himself). Nevertheless, these resolutions are put into darker perspective by the final words of Migliore, who serves as the moral arbiter of the novel: ". . . this existence itself is an imprisonment. . . . Once we were at least able to talk with our Jailer, but now even He has gone away, leaving us alone with the knowledge of insufferable loss. . . . I do not know why this has happened, but it has happened, that is our condition. . . . Some day perhaps the jails will be empty. Until then to confine any but the mad dogs among us is to compound that knowledge of insufferable loss with a blackness like the blackness of eternal night." The reprieve is a temporal one only; like all existential heroes, Kinsolving and Leverett are left with the knowledge that all men are condemned to live, at best, under the conditions of a kind of indefinite reprieve.

THE BIG PROBLEMS are all here, obviously: Being and Nothingness (Styron makes explicit use of Sartre's terms); the American artist and expatriate; the South, American materialism and collective guilt: but the mess Styron has made of his concerns is appalling—not only appalling but symptomatic, I believe, of a persistent weakness in American fiction. There is nothing inherently wrong with his elaborate machinery, nor is there any weakening of his powers as a craftsman (if anything *Set This House on Fire* is even more brilliant technically than his earlier novels); what shocks here is his unwillingness to examine the implications of Kinsolving's choice. It may be simply a failure of dramatic vision or conception that he is unable to project Flagg as a convincing emblem of evil, but what is genuinely disconcerting is his insistence on making Kinsolving as despicable and unworthy of salvation as possible. Here, where the very bigness of his design demands simplifications of a quite different order, Styron succeeds rather too well. It may be beside the point to ask whether anyone could possibly care what becomes of Kinsolving; it is not beside the point to ask why Styron gives us so little to choose between the two men. Unless Kinsolving and Flagg are presented as true antagonists, unless we can take some satisfaction in Kinsolving's decision to resist Flagg, the murder seems pointless and Kinsolving's regeneration becomes a kind of arbitrary preference for one "mad dog" rather than another. At the heart of the novel, in short, there is a moral dilemma, and at the heart of the dilemma there seems to be a basic confusion—or worse; and that worse, perhaps, is simply the old, unreasoning, unbridled love of violence and blood lust, a simple-minded, unanalytical hatred of American middle-class life, and an entirely naive belief in the efficacy of suffering. "What this great land of ours needs," cries Leverett's father, "is something to happen to it. Something ferocious and tragic, like

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what happened to Jericho or the cities of the plain—something terrible, I mean, son, so that when people have been through hellfire . . . and have suffered agony enough and grief, they'll be men again, human beings."

This preoccupation with violence and the beatification of pain seems to me an example of what Hilton Kramer once referred to as the "abuse of the terrible," a substitute for a true fictional method which would "encompass the relation of a society to its members." And whatever one's feelings about the necessity of a social sense of the kind Kramer has in mind, it is evident that *Set This House on Fire* is undermined by the shallowness of Styron's attacks on American life. His scornful rhetoric begins and ends with a few simple observations (the movie industry is full of phonies, Americans abroad are often stupid or grasping or both, material prosperity corrupts character, and so on and so on) which are primitive and superficial compared to the less pretentious and far more thoughtful work of writers like David Karp or Warren Miller.

Kinsolving learns to love himself and his country, yet it hardly seems worth the effort. He comes to love America, but there is no evidence that he understands what he now loves rather than hates; he learns to love himself, but at the cost of an oversimplification, a moral arrogance, which should disturb most readers. As for Styron's sensationalism, these remarks are not directed against reliance upon the terrible as such. Obviously a defense has to be made for the writer's freedom in this respect (if only to keep criticism such as this from turning into pious cant or special pleading); and the best defense I know of was made some years ago by Kenneth Burke, when he wrote in support of Mann and Gide: "Are not these men trying to make us at home in indecision, are they not trying to humanize the state of doubt? . . . An art may be of value purely through preventing a society from becoming too assertively, too hopelessly, itself." At most Styron merely glamorizes the state of doubt; he does nothing to humanize it or to make his readers feel that Being carries within itself an intrinsic value, that Kinsolving's rather chic agony and redemption have been anything more, in short, than a grotesque and ultimately disaffecting exercise in self-indulgence.

The Nazis in Russia

THE HOUSE BUILT ON SAND: THE CONFLICTS OF GERMAN POLICY IN RUSSIA, 1939–1945. By GERALD REITLINGER. Viking. 459 pp. $6.95.

Reviewed by SOLOMON F. BLOOM

THE two World Wars of our century were acts of a single historical drama, and the whole period since the years that produced the crisis of 1914 seems, in retrospect, to be all of a piece—a time of military violence and social convulsion. Yet the intellectual and moral effects of these wars have been very different. One has only to compare the vivacity and originality of the 20's with the flatness and impotent disillusionment of the 50's to appreciate how great the difference has been. It is enough to compare the two spates of postwar novels to notice a remarkable decline in energy and in the sense of moral outrage.

This decline helps to explain the curiously passive attitude toward the catastrophe of Nazism. Those of us who are old enough to remember the electric storm of "revisionism" in the 20's and 30's, the unrelenting castigation of conventional diplomats, generals, and "merchants of death," have been awed by the terrible stillness of the 50's. In the field of historical inquiry there has been, until quite lately, a tacit moratorium on investigating and discussing Nazism. It is a striking fact, for example, that despite the evidence supplied by the unravelling and denouement of Hitler's program, the most revealing studies of his character and mentality belong to the inter-war period. Such contemporary historians as Alan Bullock and Walter Görlitz are simply not in the same class as the Konrad Heidens and the Walter Rauschnings.

Perhaps no subject reveals the desert of interest and reflection more clearly, in this country, than the study of the Jewish catastrophe under Nazism. Despite the frenetic search for thesis subjects and projects for foundation grants, there has been no attempt to deal with this catastrophe historically and on a large and comprehensive scale. Such passivity is in sharp contrast to the activity not only of Yiddish and Hebrew writers but of students in France and Great

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Britain as well. Until his recent death, the lamented Philip Friedman worked unremittingly in this field. Leon Poliakov's *Harvest of Hate,* published in 1951, was another significant contribution to the attitude of the powers toward the anti-Semitic program of Hitler. And in the last ten years, Gerald Reitlinger has produced three valuable works dealing with several aspects of Nazism. His first, *The Final Solution: The Attempt to Exterminate the Jews of Europe, 1939–1945,* published in 1953, has been little noticed or read in the United States, but remains the most important single volume on the process of extermination. The second was *The SS: Alibi of a Nation, 1922–1945* (1957); and his latest, *The House Built on Sand,* is before us now.

MR. REITLINGER is not a trained or professional historian. Born in England and educated at Oxford, where one is taught that the man comes before the specialist, his first interests were art and archeology. The war, however, turned him to writing history in the classical vein, that is, to writing about important events of which the memory and impact are still fresh. Mr. Reitlinger has ignored the Rankean tradition of the 19th century, which deterred the historian from feeling, not to say thinking, too much about his subject. In all his books, Mr. Reitlinger has allowed himself to be horrified by what the Nazis did. Yet he has also been objective and scientific. He has read widely in primary sources, industriously assembled and classified the relevant data, and carefully documented his story.

Essentially, his narrative in *The House Built on Sand* deals with the conflicts of personality, procedure, and jurisdiction among the satraps appointed by Hitler to rule and exploit his Russian domain. Here, as in his two previous books, Reitlinger demonstrates a talent for giving life and color to the historical episode—the concentrated series of facts that cluster around an event and lead to a climax. His accounts of the "terror by hunger" practiced by Erich Koch in the Ukraine, of the slave labor hunts carried out by Fritz Sauckel, of the partisan bands, and of the organization and adventures of the Vlasov army are both factual and dramatic. Above all, he illuminates the quarrels concerning jurisdiction and aims, the rivalries and intrigues of power, and the procrastination, incoherence, and inefficiency at the top that characterized German rule in Russia, and indeed the Nazi regime in general.

The House Built on Sand contains a veritable "rogues' gallery" of the hierarchs of Nazism who were most prominent in dealing with occupied Russia. Among these men Alfred Rosenberg, the "philosopher" of racism and the minister for Eastern Affairs, occupied a central but eventually wholly impotent position. He was not, says Reitlinger,

> an absolute nonentity, but he would have been one if fate had not landed him in such an interesting position . . . one can imagine him very well fulfilling a different career, most of the time in a cheap Parisian Left Bank hotel. East European and heavily overcoated in appearance, one sees him enjoying a café reputation, despite the dullness of his eyes, as a genius who will one day produce a book of monumental and world-shaking obscurity.

Sauckel, the chief of labor recruitment, leaves two impressions on Reitlinger. "One is that of a simple, hard-working, patriotic man, the other that of an overambitious

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small-town boss, a nonentity who owed his position only to the fact that he had personified National Socialism in an area [Thuringia] once considered Red."

Less confused, and more able and brutal, was Erich Koch, the master of the Ukraine, whose very brutality came, so to speak, from the heart rather than the head. Though he had been sympathetic to leftist movements in his earlier career, he cared little what kind of assignments he carried out under the Nazis. Koch summed up his own behavior in an inaugural speech to his staff in 1941: "Gentlemen, I am known as a brutal dog; for that reason I have been appointed Reichskommissar for the Ukraine."

Finally, Reitlinger presents a rather sympathetic portrait of the Russian rebel, General Andrei Vlasov, who, when his Russian peasant housekeeper "slammed the door in the presence of two German officers . . . grimly observed, 'Excuse me, gentlemen, *ein Untermensch.*"

> The Russian de Gaulle was an expression that came easily to the lips of the *Ostpolitiker,* but, except for his great height, his air of melancholy, his solitude and his passionate sincerity, Vlasov had little in common with that greater and stronger man. Vlasov lacked the austerity of a dedicated leader. A frustrated being, a character from a Chekhov play, always on the way to Moscow, redeemed from desperate tiresomeness by an over-average appetite for women and strong drink, lovable nevertheless and easily winning the loyalty of strangers—but for what end?

THESE vignettes certainly dramatize the anarchy of the Nazi administration in Russia. But Reitlinger argues that this administration simply was not part of any consistent policy; Hitler's proposed program for Russia was the result of "pure raving lunacy." No human mind, Reitlinger continues, can register Hitler's concept "of a country of 180 million people, in which every person capable of quoting a sentence of Marxist dialectic and every responsible leader down to the lowest village headman or *starost* had been murdered . . . of that large portion of the earth's surface, coming to life afterwards under handpicked socialist leadership of limited intelligence."

This argument, however, is a criticism of the *ultimate* possibilities of Hitler's program; a more relevant approach should have asked whether or not Hitler would have tried to put the program into effect. For was the idea of running Germany first by criminal adventurers and then by a future elite produced by barnyard breeding any more conceivable? Yet there is no doubt that Hitler was in fact attempting to do so.

Reitlinger is of course aware that Hitler outlined his colonial empire for the East in *Mein Kampf* in 1926 and that he "never withdrew his original standpoint." Yet he insists that Hitler's later moves do not add up to any policy, let alone a consistent one. According to Reitlinger, Hitler could see "present alternatives clearly, but could never perceive anything beyond the successful achievements of the next move. Thus the colonialism, with which Hitler was associated and which he had to abandon in the face of defeat and the opposition of his own chiefs, was never thought out at all, because he saw nothing beyond a Germany that had been made the dominating power of the western hemisphere through the defeat of one rival."

It is quite true that it is impossible to make sense of Hitler's administrative maze and his turns of tactics; but it is also true that in the end the original aims of *Mein Kampf* show through the interstices of that maze. For in the end, Hitler sided with those satraps who acted in the spirit of making Russia a slave colony of Germany or, to put it another way, in the end those satraps prevailed who acted in this sense of Hitler's apparent aims. What is more important to note, however, is the fact that the aims of *Mein Kampf* were continuous with the policy of the more ambitious pre-Nazi *Ostpolitiker,* even though Hitler gave to that policy a characteristic touch of literal-mindedness, intransigence, and savagery.

Apart, then, from the question of the broader implications and the background of Hitler's Russian policy, Reitlinger has written a valuable contribution to the study of the administrative methods and practical implementations during Hitler's regime. That between these daily actions and the wider aims of Nazism there always was a great gap, is, in fact, a truth applicable to the Thousand Year Reich as a whole. But to discuss this problem would have taken Mr. Reitlinger beyond the limits he has set for himself in this study.

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Technology, Growth, "Progress"

THE CAUSES OF WEALTH. By JEAN FOURASTIÉ, translated and edited by THEODORE CAPLOW. The Free Press. 246 pp. $5.00.

Reviewed by LEWIS A. COSER

AMONG the favorite clichés of European observers of America has been the so-called materialism of American culture, its alleged concentration upon productivity, technological progress, and private consumption to the detriment of concern with spiritual matters. Of late, this statement has become a cliché of American commentators as well, so that even presidential candidates now find it necessary to counterbalance the appeal of abundance with the need for sacrifice. These days it is a fact, however, that the material benefits of increased productivity are much more forcibly championed in the underdeveloped and semi-developed nations than in the U. S. In short, while the haves express doubts about the benefits of the affluent society, the have-nots praise uninhibitedly the ways of material progress.

I was reminded of this paradox when reading Jean Fourastié's stimulating *The Causes of Wealth.* Written originally for a French audience, it exudes a faith in material progress which would nowadays appear slightly out-of-tune in this country. I doubt that a sophisticated contemporary American author could write that "the essential purpose of political action is the improvement of the level of living of the citizens," or that a thoughtful American would contend seriously that "restlessness, anxiety, the moral disequilibrium of the current generation is largely attributable to the defects of their dwellings." Nor is an American likely to ask whether the fascist movement would have arisen at all if the workers of Munich and Turin had lived in better houses. Such extreme "materialism" is highly naive, of course, but we cannot afford simply to smile at it: for the haves to overlook the fact that the vast majority of the world's population lives in conditions of such misery that its spokesmen must of necessity concentrate on "material" questions is a dangerous attitude. Jean Fourastié's book—and he speaks here for the underdeveloped and semi-developed nations—needs then to be read first of all for its symptomatic value; it should help us discard the peculiar snobbism of the rich, the snobbism of deploring the lack of spiritual values among the poor. The have-not nations now clamor to be given the chance to develop their standard of living to the point where they also can afford to make anxious queries about materialism a part of their cultural repertoire.

FOURASTIÉ's book, however, is of more than symptomatic interest. It presents a sophisticated theory of the human consequences of technological progress and deserves to be ranked with such pioneering works as Colin Clark's *Conditions of Economic Progress.* The author, who has been intimately associated with governmental and inter-governmental efforts to increase productivity in France and Europe, considers productivity the chief determinant of prices and hence of the standard of living. His ingenious method of converting money prices into hourly wage units of the same time and place allows him to support his arguments with a series of plastic illustrations.

Fourastié contends that the price of commodities subject to technical progress is being steadily reduced, while the price of commodities subject to little or no progress remains stationary. Thus, in France in 1702 a mirror of four square meters required, on the average, thirty-five to forty thousand hours of work and so was prohibitively expensive. In 1862, however, only one thousand hourly wage units were required, and in 1955 much less—135—so that such a mirror is now accessible even to below-average wage earners. Consider, by contrast,

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goods or services in which there has been little or no technological progress: private lessons, seats at the opera, the defense of a case in court—here prices have remained by and large what they have been for hundreds of years. The price of a haircut, for example, has changed remarkably little and varies only slightly between countries, for a haircut throughout the world still takes somewhat more than half an hour of an hourly wage. Thus, in 1947, when the hourly wage was about one dollar in the United States and about 60 francs in France, a haircut was worth one dollar in the United States and about 60 francs in France.

Such examples enable Fourastié to question the usual method of estimating standards of living—in terms of average price levels. For, were living standards measured against the price of haircuts or opera tickets, he avers, we would have to come to the conclusion that no general improvement has taken place at all. But when we measure it against the price of industrial goods which have profited from technological progress, the improvement appears tremendous. When talking about gains in real earnings, we need to specify carefully which measures we select.

The difference in measures leads Fourastié to make a distinction between primary, secondary, and tertiary sectors of the economy—distinctions related to but not identical with those of Colin Clark. Fourastié calls agricultural activities primary, industrial activities secondary, and argues that both have enjoyed great technical progress. The term tertiary activities he applies to the sector of the economy which comprises mostly services, and where progress has been slight. These distinctions lead in turn to the following proposition: Average purchasing power is not improved except in relation to the consumption of products that have benefited from increased productivity. Hence, with regard to consumption of tertiary goods, purchasing power grows slowly, but it increases swiftly with regard to primary and secondary goods. Since demand follows price, changing demand patterns are thus linked through the price level to technical progress.

Fourastié shows that general shifts in the consumption of whole populations are

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caused by differing levels of productivity. Thus, when agricultural productivity is low, as in the underdeveloped countries (but also, as we often tend to forget, in 18th-century France), the bulk of the population lives near the subsistence level, and almost all income must be spent on basic foods. Historically, then, with the vast technological revolution in agriculture during the 19th century, food products were so lowered in price that they no longer amounted to the bulk of a family's budget. At the same time, the industrial revolution so increased productivity that an average family found itself able to buy large quantities of industrial goods. Finally, while tertiary goods such as hospital care, tuition fees, and services in general, did not decrease in price, their consumption could be increased because of the price reductions—caused by technological progress—in the other two sectors.

Fourastié's distinction between the three sectors also allows him to demonstrate the impact that both technical progress and changing patterns of consumers' demand have had on the allocation of labor in a given society. As income rises, demand for the basic cereals falls off; but mechanization of the farms simultaneously increases the potential output of these foods; hence the agricultural crisis in the highly developed countries of the world and the need to draw off the population working in agriculture. In the same manner, increased productivity in the mass production industries of the secondary sector makes growing numbers of workers superfluous, so that in the long run more and more of the work force will be shifted into the tertiary sector. Thus, more of a population's total energies can be devoted to education, health, and other services.

LIKE Isaiah Berlin's "hedgehog," Fourastié knows "one big thing" and is not unduly bothered by the "foxes" who know "many things." He is aware, of course, that price levels are affected by profits as well as by productivity; he must know, though he does not touch upon it in this book, that agricultural prices, in France as well as in the United States, are largely determined by the relative strength of the farm block, foreign political considerations, and the like. (We have been reminded of this recently with respect to the price of sugar, for example.) He must know too that wage levels are not uninfluenced by union organization. But Fourastié sticks doggedly to his main point, that quite apart from fluctuations caused by extra-economic factors, prices in the long run depend on technological progress, and that finally the standard of living is tied directly to the degree of technological development. Hence his impassioned preaching of technological progress, and the almost crusading tone of some of his pages. To Fourastié, the opponents of progress are not in error, they are in sin; he is an apostle who castigates unbelievers with a righteousness rooted in moral conviction.

But this single-minded enthusiasm, which makes for much of the persuasiveness and attraction of the presentation, also has its drawbacks; above all it leads to undue simplification. One is startled, for example, when the author argues vehemently against reducing the hours of work in tertiary occupations or, moreover, in any occupations in which technological progress is not yet well advanced. (Fourastié even asserts that if the French work week between 1920 and 1939 had been maintained at fifty hours, World War II would have been avoided because the Nazis would not have dared to attack an industrialized powerful France!) It is of course true that a reduction in the length of the work week without any compensating increases in productivity leads to a decrease in national product, but then every society has institutional restrictions—based on its moral values—which delimit the optimum levels of its population's employment. We "waste" manpower by not fully utilizing the potential economic contributions of child labor and womanpower, but we do so in view of a set of values, the preservation of which appears more important than increases in productive personnel. Similarly, might not a society accept a reduction in the optimum utilization of its labor, if this

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reduction increased the realization of such other values as the general cultivation of the citizenry, the raising of educational levels, and the development of more many-sided personalities? I am aware, though, that I may here argue from the point of view of a society of abundance, and that Fourastié might well answer that such questions simply cannot *yet* be asked in societies near the subsistence level or at the beginning stage of high productivity.

Two more queries, however, need be raised. In the first place, Fourastié seems to be plainly in error when he asserts that no increase in productivity can be expected to occur in the tertiary sector in the foreseeable future. Very considerable gains may be achieved through organizational rationalization and a more effective division of labor. The supermarkets and department stores realize considerable increases in "productivity"—i.e., the technology of distribution—over the old-fashioned retail outlet. For another example, division of labor in the medical profession has increased its productivity in the past, and will continue to do so.

I have some doubt that technological progress is in fact as directly connected to the level of living as Fourastié assumes. But even if one agrees, he is left with a question hardly touched upon in this book: why is it that technological progress has been so unequally applied in the world? Why, moreover, do curves of productivity rise in discontinuous jumps rather than smoothly? And here, I am afraid, we must consider non-material, cultural factors. We need to consider the "Protestant Ethic" with its peculiar emphasis on the virtues of hard and methodical work, and we need to ask why innovating entrepreneurship, so crucial a factor in the West, seems so very feeble in the underdeveloped countries.

But then to answer all these questions would have required another volume. As it is, Fourastié's little book, in Theodore Caplow's excellent translation, despite its rambling presentation and its repetitiousness, deserves to be read with attention by all those interested in the problems of economic growth—and this, in our day, should be all of us.

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

THEODORE SOLOTAROFF is an associate editor of COMMENTARY.

MOSES HADAS's article "The Blessedness of the Scholar" appeared in March 1959; he is Jay Professor of Greek at Columbia.

STANLEY M. ELKINS, a new contributor, is the author of *Slavery: A Problem in American Institutional and Intellectual Life.*

ELMER BORKLUND teaches English at Cornell University.

SOLOMON F. BLOOM, a professor of history at Brooklyn College, will have a new book, *Europe and America,* published by Harcourt, Brace this coming spring.

LEWIS A. COSER, the author of *The Functions of Social Conflict,* teaches sociology at Brandeis.

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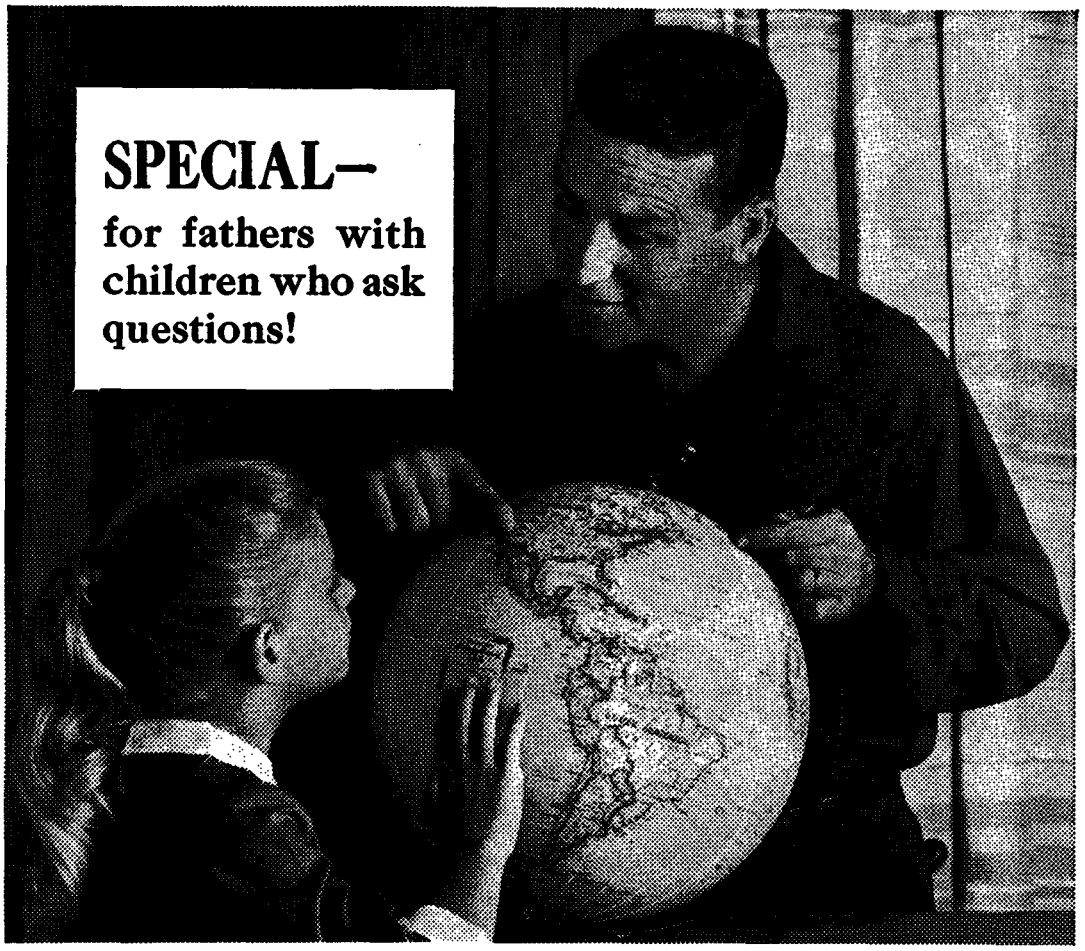

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